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# Esquire

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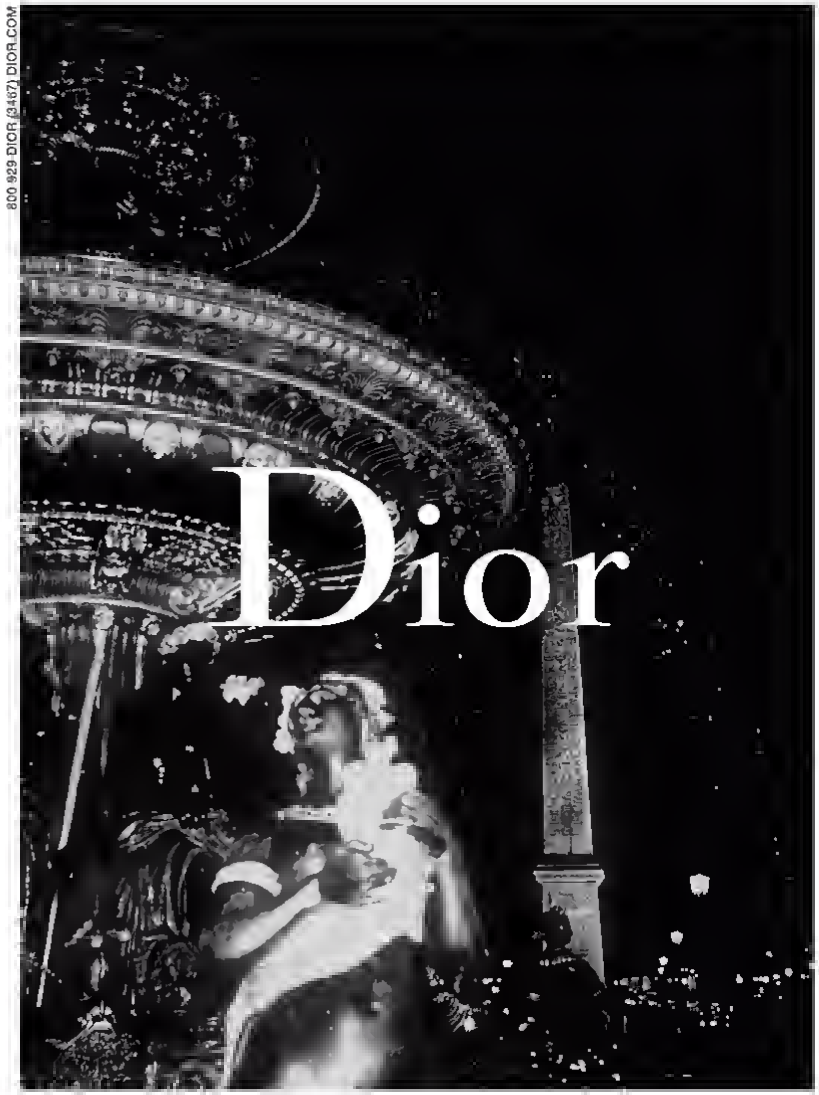
# Javier Bardem BRINGS the HEAT

Plus: BONO Talks About His Man Crush




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# this Way In:

## THE INSPIRATION
### A WARM FRONT

➡ From the Esquire archives, 1977: Lauren Hutton is shooting a movie in Los Angeles, *Welcome to L.A.*, in which she costars with Harvey Keitel and plays a photographer whose specialty is making abstract pictures of corners. Ed Ruscha finds himself hanging out on the set. He decides to take some shots of Hutton in and around the Chateau Marmont. And why not? Shooting Hutton is a nice break from taking photographs of gas stations. (Google it, if you have to ask: Ruscha + gas stations.)



THAT FIRST WARM DAY
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Watch by Belston, bracelet by Billy Baker Co.



## THE WOVEN ONE
## A GOOD MOVE THIS SPRING

➡ Sandals aren't for everyone, especially when there's no sand in sight. (Or if you agree with us that what the world needs more of is fewer exposed toes.) This slip-on, made of superflexible (and well-ventilated) woven calfskin, is a sharper addition to your warm-weather closet.

Loafers ($830) by **Fratelli Rossetti**, 212 888 5107

WANT TO SEE MORE SHOES OF THE SEASON?
CHECK OUT **EVERY SHOE TELLS A STORY,**
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**JAVIER BARDEM**




PHOTOGRAPHED BY **ALEXEI HAY** FOR ESQUIRE

*Left, Sweater by Michael Kors. Right, Jacket by Emporio Armani. Production by Joe Daley for A+ Productions. Casting by Emily Poenisch. Grooming by Kim Verbeck for the Wall Group.*

photograph (top left) **Ana Cuba**






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MAD MAN

**JAVIER BARDEM** PLAYS CHARACTERS WHO ARE OVERLY TORMENTED OR SIMPLY SCARY AS ALL CRAP NO WONDER HE LOVES HEAVY METAL

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photographs Alexei Hay






## A GREAT SCULPTURE FOR YOUR LIVING ROOM

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➡ This wireless speaker, designed by architect David Adjaye, harks back to the days when audio gear had heft—not for show but for fidelity. The formidable wall of sound, cast in a smooth concrete composite, employs sheer mass to ensure it won't rattle the surface it's set on, even with the volume cranked up to 11. Acoustically, the MA770 is assertive but honest and true. Visually, too: We've set the speaker on its side so you can see how the front (a golden rectangle) dissolves into gentle curves and triangles. "God is in the details," says Adjaye, "and the details are for you."

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photograph Ben Goldstein


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Author of "That First Warm Day" page 78



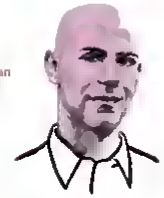
**Credentials:** Author of the best selling novel *Sweetbitter*. **First-warm-day plans.** Lying outside with a blanket, a book, and a bottle of rosé. **Theme song:** "Lived in Bars," by Cat Power. **Top road-trip destination.** "Puerto Nuevo in Baja California, where they serve huge grilled lobsters right on the water."

**Alexei Hay**
Photographer of "Mad Man," page 70



**Credentials:** His work has appeared in *Elle*, *Town & Country*, and *Numéro Homme*. **On shooting Javier Bardem:** "He showed us many different faces, but he withheld his 'Disney Face.'" **Theme song:** "I'm In with the Out Crowd," by the Jesus and Mary Chain. **Top road-trip destination:** The Alamo

**Adam Grant**
Author of "Mark Cuban Gets Laud" page 64



**Credentials.** Author of two best sellers and coauthor of *Option B* with Sheryl Sandberg. **On his new Esquire column:** "It's a deep dive into the minds of original thinkers, their work habits, and their ways of collaborating." **Theme song:** "Give a Little Bit," by Supertramp. **Top road-trip destination:** Angelo's in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**Jessica Pressler**
Author of "Mad Man," page 70



**Credentials:** Contributing editor at *New York* magazine. **How she won over Javier Bardem.** "I wore a Motörhead T-shirt." **Theme song:** "Here I Go Again," by Whitesnake. **Top road-trip destination:** "Littleton Diner in New Hampshire. It's the platonic ideal of a diner."

**J. D. Daniels**
Author of "Signs and Wanders" page 106



**Credentials:** Contributor to *The Paris Review*, author of *The Correspondence*. **States he drove through for this story.** North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. **While listening to:** "Very weepy country music." **Road-trip pro tip:** "The less you bring, the better."

Illustrations: **Samuel Kerr**







LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

# CALL IT, FRIENDO

With just a glance at this month's cover, any guy worth his monthly subscription to Netflix should be able to name the movie in which the following scene takes place.

"What's the most you've ever lost in a coin toss?" says a customer with a peculiar haircut to an old man behind a cash register.

"Sir?" says the friendly man, who owns the place, a gas station somewhere in West Texas.

"The most you've ever lost in a coin toss?" repeats the customer, who murders anyone who crosses his path.

"I don't know," says the owner, a little alarmed. "I couldn't say."

The stranger flips a quarter into the air, trapping it beneath his right hand on the counter. "Call it," he orders.

"Call it?"

"Yes," says the man, flashing his impatience.

"Or—what?"

"Just call it!"

The old man takes a dry swallow. "Well," he counters, "we need to know what we're calling it for here."

"You need to call it," repeats the customer. "I can't call it for you. It wouldn't be fair."

"I didn't put nothin' up," objects the old man.

"Yes, you did," declares his tormentor. "You've been putting it up your whole life. You just didn't know it. You know what date is on this coin?"

"No," says the old man.

"1958," says the customer, whom the old man now realizes isn't here just to buy a tank of gas. "It's been traveling twenty-two years to get here. And now it's here, and it's either heads or tails. And you have to call it."

This is, of course, one of the most memorable of many memorable scenes in *No Country for Old Men*. In Javier Bardem's hands, the assassin Anton Chigurh is played as a Mephistophelian oddball determined, it seems, to be named employee of the month by the drug cartel that has hired him to recover a satchel containing $2.4 mil-

lion. Bad guys, leading guys, Disney villains—as long as a role is intimidating, Bardem is in. "It's one of the reasons why I'm an actor," he says in Jessica Pressler's atypically unguarded profile. "Because it takes me out of what you call 'the comfort place.'" In other words, when it comes to a big bet, even if he's afraid, he knows he's got to call it.

As inspirational as an example like this is, we all know there's a lot more to learning about the psychology of making wise decisions than simply following a courageous rule of thumb. Perhaps it was the Brahmin bookworm Ralph Waldo Emerson who got Americans hooked on self-improvement when he wrote, "Always do what you are afraid to do." For subsequent generations, that got recast into "Just Do It" by Nike and "Think Different" by Apple and, in 1980, "Man at His Best" by Esquire, a mantra that—in addition to suggesting that life is about being well informed, well read, and well dressed—has always signaled an interest in performance-enhancing knowledge. That's why we're starting a new section this issue, beginning on page 56, in which each month we'll do what Esquire does best—assemble a group of witty and wise voices who bring perspective and intelligence to the concerns we all wrestle with.

New features in this section include a Q&A with some of the great creative minds around—like Mark Cuban—conducted by Adam Grant, a professor at Wharton and author of the best-selling *Originals* and the just-published *Option B*, coauthored with Sheryl Sandberg, a probing conversation on the oft-verboten subject of men and money (*New York Times* financial journalist Andrew Ross Sorkin is our first victim); Dwight Garner's wonderfully personal column on the inner life, which was nominated for a National Magazine Award earlier this year; and, when the moment seems right, an annotated look at a legendary Esquire piece from the archive—in this case, Ken Auletta's masterful 1978 profile of nefarious power player and Trump mentor Roy Cohn—that bears fresh reading.

This issue also contains a new profile destined for classic status: Sam Tanenhaus's definitive study of Pat Buchanan, the original Republican apostate, rule-book rewriter, and anti-almost-everything presidential candidate. "How can such a fanatic be so likable?" the likable fanatic Garry Wills is quoted as saying in the piece.

It brought back my own first impression of Buchanan, when I was a teenager and enthralled by CNN's *Crossfire*, which pitted him against the left-wing commentator Tom Braden, who had a smoker's croak and the wrinkled face of a Palm Beach Wasp. Whatever Buchanan said—it's a haze of invective now—I liked him the most; he was funny, self-deprecating, desperately persuasive, a showman. Much like Anton Chigurh, in fact, he could hypnotize almost anyone right into his spider's web.

**Jay FIELDEN**

WISE MAN



➡ "Learn from the mistakes of others. You can never live long enough to make them all yourself." —*Groucho Marx*

photograph (top left) **Alexei Hay**



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PEAK TV

# KEVIN BACON IS NOT A DICK

## He just plays a guy named that on *Transparent* creator JILL SOLOWAY'S new show

*By Edan Lepucki*

Kevin Bacon had some reservations when he was initially offered the titular role on Amazon's *I Love Dick*.

When we first encounter the character, he's dismounting a horse on a main street in Marfa, the small Texas town turned artist mecca. He exudes effortless Marlboro Man cool in his plaid shirt and cowboy hat. Dick is a Man with a capital-*M*: laconic, tough, alternately dismissive and piercing. But Bacon refuses to be one dimensional. "If I'm just an asshole in cowboy boots," he says, "there's nothing for me to do."

The new series from *Transparent* creator Jill Soloway (streaming May 12) stars Kathryn Hahn as Chris, a struggling filmmaker who follows her continued ›

Continued husband (Griffin Dunne) to his prestigious fellowship in Marfa and becomes obsessed with Dick Jarrett, the self-described "post-ideas" art-world titan who runs the place. Chris's infatuation reinvigorates—and complicates—not only her marriage but also her life as an artist. Whoever played Dick would have to be mesmerizing, hard to pin down, and worthy of fixation. Enter Mr. Bacon.

I meet the 58-year-old actor at Neue House Hollywood, a members-only community on Sunset Boulevard that offers seven floors of beautifully appointed workspace—think blond wood and sleek leather couches—and, better yet, an escape from the Hollywood scene. He offers to carry my coffee as we head out onto an outdoor deck. "I was a waiter," he explains, though the gesture feels far more chivalrous than food service would ever allow.

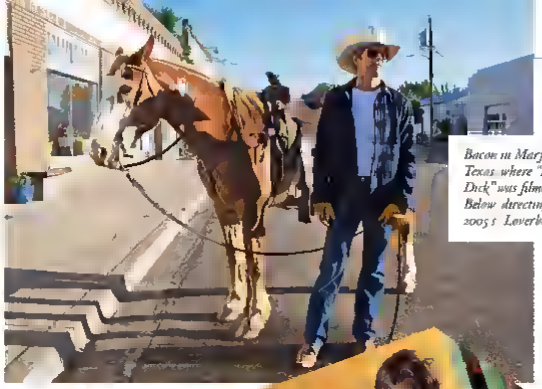
"This okay?" he asks when an ambulance wails below. I take in his ice-blue eyes, those ropy, tan arms, that spark plug of a body. In other words, everything that makes him perfectly cast for a story about a woman's preoccupation with a man she hardly knows. *Yes,* I say. *Yes, this is great.*

*I Love Dick* was adapted from Chris Kraus's cult feminist memoir-slash-novel of the same name, admired for its unapologetic portrayal of the female id. (The show's Chris is a quasi-autobiographical version of the author.) In the book, Dick is a cipher, everywhere and nowhere at once. On the show, Bacon has made Dick human, imbuing the character with flashes of vulnerability, even as he becomes a bedroom fantasy for Chris and her husband. (In an early sex scene between the married couple, Chris imagines Dick looking on impassively from an armchair and whispering, "Don't cum yet.")

When Bacon was introduced to the project, he says, it brought to mind the early works of Cassavetes, Scorsese, and Coppola—those "real, gritty, edgy *These people can't be actors!*" movies. The ones he's been searching for his whole career.

"I've constantly found my way back into independent film from the beginning," he says. "And not with very much success, frankly. I've never discovered that breakout *sex, lies, and videotape* indie that I wanted to be in." In this current filmmaking climate, Bacon asks, "Where does a guy like me get to keep doing that kind of stuff?" He seems to have found his answer in this series.

Because this is a Jill Soloway show, gender politics are front and center. Bacon thinks men will like it. "It's sexy," he says more than once. "Every episode is. And it's funny." He describes how he and Dunne play two sides of the male persona—the reticent, masculine guy and the sensitive, funny intellectual. "The journey of what unites them or separates them is ... really fun to watch."



*Bacon in Marfa, Texas, where "I Love Dick" was filmed. Below, directing 2005's "Loverboy."*



**Esky** *Wisdom*



There is a store for Mother's Day shopping and there is a store for Valentine's Day shopping, and ne'er the twain shall meet.

Bacon wasn't drawn in by *I Love Dick*'s heady intellectualism so much as he was by the obsession it depicts, and how that obsession can influence a marriage. The series retains the edge and danger of the book, the constant slippages of understanding between people and within ourselves, while also making it accessible: frisky, comedic, and suspenseful.

Soloway says it was "obvious that Bacon had to be cast as Dick," and that she drew on their similarities to help shape the character. "Hearing from Kevin's heart about how it felt to be [objectified] as a symbol of something—in this case, fame—was truly transformational," she says. "As men who symbolize the pressures of being a 'hero,' there is something melancholy in both Dick and Bacon."

Bacon points across the street to Sunset Gower Studios, where the production had a stage. He gives a wry smile and recounts an early meeting with the writers, all of whom are female. "We don't need men in the writers' room," he recalls executive producer Sarah Gubbins joking. "We have Kevin Bacon." She may have said it for laughs, but that doesn't mean she was wrong. ■

**Toys for not tots:** This replica of the mid-century roadster is carved from a solid block of walnut and reduces those glorious open-top racers to their essence. It's the Platonic ideal of the front-drive Keck Special that tore up the Indy 500 circa 1950. *$875, toytorse.com*





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CARS

# RELEASE THE BEAST

## LEXUS was the sleepy choice. Then the LC 500 happened.

*By Kevin Sintumuang*

We'll talk about speed. But first, let's hit the brakes. There is a road in Tennessee called the Tail of the Dragon. With its 318 turns over 11 miles of Smoky Mountains, the name is not hyperbolic. If you are traversing it with aplomb, as you should this fever dream for drivers of cars as amped-up as the 471-hp Lexus LC 500 (of which I'm white-knuckling the beefy leather wheel), you need to brake as manically as you accelerate. And when you do: *buh-WHOOM! buh-WHOOM!* The automatic downshifting in the Sport Plus mode of this Alcantara-clad sledgehammer occurs with such bassy orchestration it would make Wagner blush.

Make no mistake: Going fast is a visceral experience, too. An ingenious acoustic tunnel pumps the purrs of the silky 5.0-liter V-8 directly into the sumptuous interior for optimal aural appreciation. The car is available with a Mark Levinson sound system, but really, who needs it?

How was this new classic, which has the presence of an Aston Martin, born? Legend has it that while attending the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance in 2011, Lexus head Akio Toyoda learned that we Yanks thought the brand was—dull. (Reliability isn't exactly exciting.) Designers at its California-based design lab got a clean slate to conjure a vehicle that would give Lexus unadulterated sex appeal. *We'll show these guys dull.* It worked. Sometimes when you prod the nerd, you awaken the beast.



**All the feels:** Minutiae matters in golf—how equipment *feels* can give you more confidence. Which is why you should absolutely love the most important yet overlooked club in your bag: the putter. The new **Odyssey O-Works** has a faceplate with "microhinges" that flex when they touch the ball, giving it better forward roll. Additionally, the O-Works provides a just-soft-enough touch and a crisp sound on contact that's almost as satisfying as the *plunk* you hear while sinking a ten-footer. $230. odysseygolf.com

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SPOTLIGHT

# ELISABETH MOSS'S MAD WORLD

The actress didn't think she'd ever see another role as original as *Mad Men*'s Peggy. Then she got the call for *The Handmaid's Tale*.

*By Michael Tedder*



**PROFANE AND PROFOUND** *Moss isn't afraid to tackle difficult subject matter onscreen, but in real life she's quick to laugh (and swears like a sailor)*

On November 9, while you were nursing your Election Day hangover, Elisabeth Moss was up at 6:00 A.M. to shoot an episode of *The Handmaid's Tale*, Hulu's dystopian—and eerily prescient—fable of patriarchy run rampant, and one of the most anticipated TV events of the year. "Obviously, it was a unique experience going to work a few hours after certain events happened," the 34-year-old actress says. "I don't necessarily want to call it a good one."



*Red is the new black on Hulu's dystopian drama premiering April 26*

Based on Margaret Atwood's seminal 1985 best seller, the series introduces a United States that's been seized by religious authoritarians who use a staged terrorist attack to impose strict martial law. The regime also strips women of their names and rights, reducing them to procreative playthings for the upper class. It's a thrilling shock to the system delivered in hour-long installments—and, frankly, a premise that would have felt a little overwrought had we found ourselves pledging allegiance to our first female president this year.

But our current political climate being what it is, Atwood's book soared to the top of Amazon's best-seller list within hours of the trailer's television debut at the Super Bowl. "I think people are feeling like they can relate to it," Moss says, "which is unfortunate." Then her tone becomes serious. "But at the same time, there are infringements upon the Constitution and our human rights that need to be looked at. If this book added some light to that area, then I'm happy to bring it to life."

The actress thought she'd take a break from television after her career-defining role as *Mad Men*'s secretary-turned-copywriter-turned-badass Peggy Olson and her follow up as a gritty small-town detective on *Top of the Lake*. Then this script came along with the offer to play Offred, the free-thinking narrator who helps plot the handmaids' resistance in the hope of being reunited with her daughter. "I couldn't stand the idea of anyone else doing it," she says. "You get asked to play Offred in *The Handmaid's Tale* and you're kind of a fucking idiot if you don't say yes."

But Moss, a lighthearted self-professed "Valley girl," insists that her highbrow résumé is just a natural by-product of seeking out complicated roles. "I don't set out looking for stuff like that. I just think it's interesting to show the strengths and vulnerabilities of being a woman. Maybe one day I'll play a girl from the Valley," she says, laughing. Then again, "I feel like that'd be kind of boring." And in this day and age, there's no time for boring. **E**



photograph **Cass Bird**

GARMIN.





TRAVEL

# RENÉ REDZEPI'S MEXICO

## The famed NOMA CHEF shares the TAQUERIAS, ruins, and markets that made him fall in love with the country

Notwithstanding his reputation as the godfather of contemporary Nordic cooking, the Danish chef Rene Redzepi has had a mad crush on Mexico for a decade or so. Restorative winter vacations in Tulum and Mérida—a welcome break from the pressures of the kitchen at Noma, his zeitgeist shifting restaurant in Copenhagen—wound up blossoming into a full on obsession. He has gone off on countless eating/drinking/foraging excursions all over the country. Redzepi, who is preparing for Noma's sold-out seven week pop up in Tulum this spring (with chef Rosio Sanchez), offers a few tips, in his own words, on traveling through the land that cured his Scandinavian blues. *—Jeff Gordinier*

## 1. First... Tacos

Mexico City

"Los Cocuyos. Go late at night. It's basically a 100-square-foot kitchen open to the street, and about a third of the space is taken up by a giant cauldron with large chunks of meat and offal simmering in fat."

## 2. Ruin Yourself

Uxmal

"The ruins of Uxmal, in the Yucatán, have fewer tourists, and you can even climb the pyramid, which is not always the case. Once there, you can also drive to the food market in the little town of Ozkutzcab or visit the town of Muna, where there is another delicious taqueria called El Regalo de Dios—get the recado negro salbutes.

Another wonderful Mayan village in the Yucatán is Yaxunah. There is a family Continued >



**Esky** *Wisdom*

Is Donald Trump a secret fan of the late economist and Nobel Laureate Thomas C. Schelling? Schelling often compared international conflict to a game of chicken in which one driver could gain advantage by ripping his steering wheel out and waving it at his opponent. Buckle up!



Illustration Hisham Akira Gharaeeha


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Continued>

who cooks traditional cochinita pibil; it might just be the best mouthful I've ever had in Mexico. Preorder it through Catherwoodtravels [catherwoodtravels.com]."



## 3. No Spring-Breakers Here

Isla Holbox

"Head over to Isla Holbox for its beach. This is a supertranquil island that the hordes of tourists have yet to find, unlike the Mayan Riviera. Also, check out the inland-lagooo system at Bacalar, and obviously you need to visit the cenotes while you are in the Yucatan. Go to as many as you can, because they are amazing; you will want to have time and space to swim in these incredible sinkholes."

## 4. Up in the Air

Chiapas

"San Cristóbal de las Casas in Chiapas was perhaps the most beautiful city that we saw on our journey. The high altitudes make for a very mild and pleasant climate. Plus, it had maybe the most picturesque market that I have ever seen in my life—straight out of a movie. You could easily spend a whole day just walking around and exploring the vast selection of unique foodstuffs."

## 5. Luxe Valley

Valle de Guadalupe

"To go into this desert landscape, to experience the sunrise and sunset—truly unforgettable. The valley itself is laden with great food. There's Laja, which is worth the journey just to eat the vegetable tostada. Do what we did and spend the night at La Villa del Valle, with dinner at Corazón de Tierra."



## 6. Secret Mexico

Tabasco

"Tabasco is a bit out of the way and very few people go there, but the market in Villahermosa is extraordinary because of its tropical feel. Tabasco is simply hotter, stickier, and more humid than any other place I've been to in Mexico, and this intense climate is reflected in its exotic ingredients—we discovered a lot of new produce there. At the market, there is a little stand called La Güera where they make these pies from masa dough. Order the plátano and the yuca."

**Nostalgic sip:** Resurrecting defunct whiskey brands is the new thing, and Old Ripy, which was discontinued in 1950, is the latest bottle to come back to life. It's one of two new releases from the Whiskey Barons Collection, from the makers of Wild Turkey. A novel idea, sure, but there's no denying the juice (and label) is good. Think big oak, spice, and dried fruit. *$50 for a 375 ml bottle*




**MUSICAL HISTORY**
*Ronnie Wood visited C&F often and Morrissey was a regular, even though a meeting there with Johnny Marr to discuss a video is said to have led to the Smiths' demise.*

FOOD AND DRINK

# BRITISH (RE)INVASION

### THE L.A. BAR WHERE EVERY ANGLO ROCKER GRABBED A PINT RETURNS FOR AN ENCORE

Los Angeles and London have always been in love with each other. Brits, historically deprived of vitamins C and D, have a fabled history of decamping to the land of citrus and sunshine, and Hollywood has a habit of welcoming them with open yoga-toned arms. For much of the 1980s, a kind of Californglophilia ran rampant on the airwaves in Los Angeles, and the nexus of all that Britannia/California love could be found in a courtyard off Sunset Boulevard. The Cat & Fiddle, a lager-and-Scotch-egg pub that had been opened (in Laurel Canyon, originally) by British musician and Ronnie Wood mate Kim Gardner, became a home away from home for English bands like the Buzzcocks and the English Beat, who found themselves thousands of miles from a dependable chip shop. "We'd sit out there and have meetings," remembers Ken Friedman, who worked with acts including UB40, Simple Minds, and the Smiths back then. "They'd wanna have pints of beer. They were homesick."

Friedman is in the bar-and-restaurant business these days. In partnership with British-born chef April Bloomfield (above), he has created New York watering holes such as the Spotted Pig and the John Dory Oyster Bar. So there's a kind of rock 'n' roll logic behind bringing in the duo to reboot the Cat & Fiddle space in June. Friedman will restore the Oxford-to-the-Pacific romance of the place. Expect a roaring hearth in the kitchen and clusters of local flora—avocado, lime, lemon, bay laurel, rosemary, bougainvillea—scenting the air. Think of it as the one spot in Los Angeles where you'll look more at home if you don't have a tan. —*J. G.*





MUSIC

# BEYOND COACHAPALOOZAROO

The **BIG FESTIVALS** are becoming interchangeable. It's time to branch out. *By Ben Ratliff*



I remember Stephen Malkmus, the previous generation's indie-rock hero, addressing the audience on a blazing afternoon at Coachella in 2008. He was wearing the kind of sun hat that signals you've given up on being cool. Sound sludge from Cold War Kids and Boys Noize bled over from the neighboring stages. "Hey, guys, make it count!" Malkmus said into the microphone. "You'll only get to go to, like, 34 of these in your life." What a vibe killer. He's not wrong, though.

To be clear: I love loud music. I love the kaleidoscopic sensory attack. I love the unmistakable communal surge of *We came all this way, and here, now, in the sweet spot—something's happening!* And Coachella is a primo platform, a really event-y event, particularly after nightfall.

But as these pilgrimages start to add up—and over the years, I've been to about three dozen big out-on-a-field multistage festivals—the particulars begin to blur together, and what persists is the opportunistic intersection of temporarily cool bands that are on tour anyway and the YOLO capitalism of this year's young people with cash.

The thrill and the Instagram cachet wear off. And then what? Then there are other festivals, organized around different principles, festivals that are more contained and discerning or more culturally rooted in their location, festivals that aren't trying to be all things to all people and, as a result, create a distinct value that the big ones no longer can.

It turns out I don't need a sea of humanity; I prefer specificity and meaning. Here is where that can be found in the year ahead.

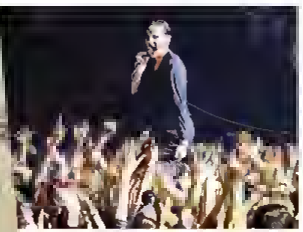
**Up to eleven:** Drill Festival, Berlin, May 7, Brussels, May 13 (Los Angeles was March 30–April 2, and Leeds, UK, was April 21–23). Run by the English postpunk band Wire, Drill obeys no fixed format. Full of smart, spartan rock, it appears at irregular intervals, and the events range in length, though they often culminate with an orchestra of guitars performing Wire's largely two-chord song "Pink Flag."

**Computer love:** Moogfest, Durham, North Carolina, May 18–21. "Electronic music," broadly speaking, is the theme of Moogfest, named after Bob Moog, creator of his eponymous synthesizer. But the strength of this festival lies in how it divides, and sharpens, that neutral category into themes. Flying Lotus and Animal Collective are among this year's headliners.

**Death of Auto-Tune:** Essence Festival, New Orleans, June 29–July 2. Beyoncé pulled out of Coachella, so if you want the black-female-pop apotheosis, go to Essence Festival. The audience is not easily impressed, and the performances are high-stakes. Solange, Chaka Khan, Mary J. Blige, and Chance the Rapper are on the bill.

**Shuffle play:** Le Guess Who? Utrecht, Netherlands, November 9–12. Le Guess Who? resembles Knoxville, Tennessee's Big Ears in its casual disregard for genre boundaries, but this one veers more toward obscuro-rock and musical extremism of all kinds.

**Kick out the jams:** Damaged City Fest, Washington, D.C., April 2018. If you think hardcore punk all sounds like it did 35 years ago, you're not listening. Since 2013, Damaged City has been the subculture's annual referendum on everything. That it happens in Washington, D.C., the locus of Bad Brains and Minor Threat on the cusp of the Reagan era and now the locus of, you know, is perfect.



**SHOW OF HANDS**
*Savages performing at last year's Le Guess Who? in the Netherlands.*




**Woman versus wild:** *Borne*, the latest from sci-fi savant Jeff VanderMeer, begins innocently enough: Girl meets strange plantlike creature. But if you haven't read his haunting Southern Reach trilogy, prepare yourself—this is *Walden* gone horribly wrong. $26, Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

PHOTOGRAPHY

# THE HUNGRY EYE

## MOOERNIST MASTER IRVING PENN GETS AN OVERDUE RETROSPECTIVE

Irving Penn was photography's great equalizer. He made unforgettable portraits of Hitchcock, Stravinsky, and Auden, but he could lend just as much dignity, even grandeur, to an anonymous English charwoman or a barefoot newsboy from the streets of Cuzco. Penn was interested in capturing, not flattering, his subjects. His frank gaze made some sitters, like the writer Thornton Wilder, "long for Cecil Beaton, three filters, and a background of rosebushes!"

"Irving Penn: Centennial," the blockbuster retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (running through July 30), shows how the many pieces of Penn fit together: his fearless curiosity, his classical rigor, his darkroom wizardry, and his surprising willingness to sometimes thumb his nose at good taste. A memorable example of this last tendency is his still life series of cigarette butts, which he fished out of street gutters in the early 1970s, transforming the detritus of urban life into huge sculptural masterpieces. Edward Steichen deemed his 1949 suite of nudes (see below) too explicit for MoMA.

A hunger for new images took Penn to the very ends of the earth, and wherever he went, from Peru to Nepal to Cameroon, he set up a makeshift studio, creating a space that belonged to neither the photographer nor his subject but put them on equal footing. A former assistant recalled how Penn once converted a "primitive bidet" into his darkroom. The next day, while driving to another village in what is now Benin, Penn silently examined the negatives against the windshield of his car before issuing his verdict: "Perfect." —*Stephen Heyman*

**NO FILTER**
*From top: Penn's "After Dinner Games," "Fishmonger," and "Nude No. 72."*

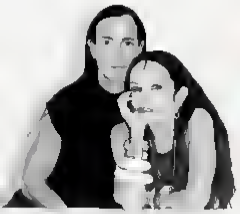








Illustration **Paul Pope**



DESIGN

# A BRUTAL EFFORT

## *RICK OWENS FURNITURE* HIGHLIGHTS THE DESIGNER'S OTHER GREAT PASSION: CREATING BOLD SCULPTURAL PIECES FIT FOR A TEMPLE (OF TASTE)

If you've seen the Goth futurist garments Rick Owens turns out each season, you know this is not a guy who goes in for everyday midcentury modern home decor. The furniture he's been making since 2006 looks more like it belongs in a massive prehistoric temple. A new book from Rizzoli outlines the creative process between the designer and his wife and muse, Michèle Lamy. Stark, totemic pieces in petrified bark, alabaster, plywood, and concrete fill these pages, interspersed with shots of Lamy directing teams of craftsmen. Owens once described his dream environment as "a Brutalist fur on a Brutalist rock next to a Brutalist fire in a Brutalist cave." You might not want to live there, but that's the beauty of this book—crack it open and take the trip anytime you like. *$65; rizzoliusa.com* —*Jon Roth*













**1. Curl Up and Stay Awhile**
Owens staged a petrified-wood daybed and twin stag-antler chairs in a 16th-century Swiss aristocrat's home. The cowhide mattress and fur throw are rare concessions to comfort.

**2. Pull the Plug**
An element from Owens's "3Prong Bench" works just as well as a sculpture.

**3. Light Reading**
On the bedside table: cigarette butts, the score to Strauss's *Salome*, and a tome on Viennese architect Otto Wagner. Rich stuff for a minimalist master.

**4 Home Sweet Home**
Substantial furniture and a sculptural urn set the tone in Owens and Lamy's Place du Palais-Bourbon home (which once housed the French Socialist party) in Paris.

**5. Totem Goals**
Animal-hide stools, stacked-plywood benches, brass vessels, and antler accents form a makeshift altar.

**6. Balanced Beams**
The "Plug Table," in alabaster and plywood. At 12 feet long, it's perfect for a big dinner party (or a sacrificial rite).



photographs **Adrien Dirand**


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REQUIRED READING

# SCOTT TUROW: 3 BOOKS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Forty years after his memoir of Harvard Law School, *One L*, and thirty years after his best-selling thinking man's legal thriller, *Presumed Innocent*, the lawyer-slash-author talks about his early Joycean ambitions and his repressed connection to Saul Bellow. His latest novel, *Testimony*, is out this month.

*—Tyler Conroy*

**1.**
**Herzog,**
*by Saul Bellow*

In the 1960s, Bellow was regarded as the great living American novelist. That alone would make him a figure of interest to an aspiring writer. But he was also Jewish and from Chicago, as I am. A week after Bellow died, when I finally lifted the lid on my own subconscious, I remembered that he and my father had gone to high school together. I even remembered my father stomping around the house harrumphing that Solomon Bellows became Saul Bellow. This from a guy who changed his name from Turowetsky to Turow. In retrospect, it's clear that Bellow provided insight into the world my father came from, and he was translating that experience into terms I could accept.

**2.**
**Tell Me a Riddle,**
*by Tillie Olsen*

One of my college roommates at Amherst loaned me this big, thick volume of O. Henry Prize winners, one of which was *Tell Me a Riddle*. I didn't know much about the writer. Lo and behold, late in my junior year, Amherst hires Tillie Olsen as a visiting writer. I had my senior year off to do nothing but write fiction, and Tillie was my principal tutor. She was an autodidact—she never ever finished high school—and her literary preferences helped me understand the limitations of the canon. Students today take that for granted, but it was a revelation in 1969.

**3.**
**A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,**
*by James Joyce*

I read it as a senior in high school—I think it was an assignment in my English class—and at the time I thought I was reading my autobiography. I had never encountered anything like it... and it really did blow my mind. Of course, I wanted to be the next James Joyce at that point. I sat down to reread it in the last year and I didn't think it was my autobiography anymore. When you reread books that had that kind of impact on you, it's virtually guaranteed that they're not going to affect you in the same way.

**Esky *Wisdom***



List of Words Only to Be Used Sarcastically, If at All

- interface, as in between two people ("We interfaced about the new logo.")
- personal brand
- optics
- carnage
- iterate

ENEMY MINE

# MATT LAUER MEETS "THE NEXT MATT LAUER"



VS.



| MATT LAUER | MEGYN KELLY |
|---|---|
| **Résumé:** Host of the *Today* show since 1997 | **Résumé:** Host of *The Kelly File*, next cohost of the *Today* show |
| **Salary:** $20 million per year | **Salary:** $15 million per year (she turned down $20 million to stay at Fox News) |
| **Big get:** Charlie Sheen | **Big get:** Jim Bob Duggar |
| **Workplace incident:** Ann Curry's bungled ouster (aka "Operation Bambi") | **Workplace incident:** The unreconstructed lechery of Roger Ailes |
| **Campaign memento:** Jeers for his interviews with Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump | **Campaign memento:** Death threats from Trump supporters |
| **Claim to fame:** Cameo in *Sharknado 2* | **Claim to fame:** Defying Fox News's rumored ban on pants for female anchors |

Norway courtesy of Argosy Books



*Marley at his home studio in Miami.*

MY FAVORITE THING

# DAMIAN MARLEY

on his AKAI MPC RENAISSANCE drum machine

Photograph by Alexis Hetherington

••• Damian Marley, the youngest son of Bob Marley & eleven children, is bringing reggae into the digital era. *Stony Hill*, his first solo album since the 2005 smash *Welcome to Jamrock*, is out this month.

I've been using Akai drum machines since about '94. Back in those days, the Akai MPC was the premier drum machine. Nothing could compete with it. This particular model is basically a replica of those analog drum machines, but it uses a computer as the brain, which brings it to the modern times.

I can play a little bit of guitar and a little bit of piano, but my expertise is really on drum machine programming. It's my weapon of choice in the studio. My biggest song to date, "Welcome to Jamrock," was made on an Akai drum machine.

Over the years, these machines have helped shape hip-hop. A lot of songs you hear sampling old records era also made with them. You record snippets of the old records into the [MPC] and then you're able to manipulate them. I can just jump on the drum set and play a high-hat pattern, and then I re-record that high-hat pattern into this drum machine and tighten it up a bit with something called "quantize," which basically gets everything on beat. It manipulates songs in a way that I couldn't if I tried to play live. It's just been a vehicle over the years to help me express myself really. That's it, you know? A great tool to express myself with. *—As told to Julia Black*

WATCH BEYOND

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# the Code:

Because style is always personal

## THE WHITE STUFF

**It's time to REVISIT the surprisingly stylish, rule-breaking appeal of the WHITE SOCK**

Deep breaths now. The image at left may leave you confused. Concerned. Angry, even. And we don't blame you. You've been told for years that white socks are a mistake outside the gym (and not even cool there, really), that the stylish man's socks and pants should match. The rule's been drilled into us so relentlessly it feels about as immutable as the law of gravity.

But listen. Down really is up. For years

Leather jacket ($1,150) by **Church's**, trousers ($545) by **PT Pantaloni Torino**; socks ($20) by **American Trench**.

photograph: **Clément Pascal**

we've been expressing ourselves on our ankles. Socks in argyle and stripes, vibrant colors and novelty patterns, fill our dresser drawers. Sometimes we skip them altogether. It was only a matter of time before we took on the untouchable: white socks.

Worn the right way—with cuffed trousers and a chunky loafer—they have minimalist appeal, creating contrast without the look-at-me brashness of something red or yellow. In the '50s and '60s, this look was a hallmark of casual style—a dress code that felt relaxed but considered, worlds removed from the sneakers/ripped jeans/hoodie formula that passes for dressing down today. Jack Kennedy wore them regularly on sailing trips and family vacations. Paul Newman and Clint Eastwood kept the look alive throughout the '70s, and in the '80s mod revivalists picked up the trend and made it part of their streamlined, monochrome uniform.

Somewhere between then and now, white socks fell out of favor. But in fashion, nothing stays dead for long. Today, they are so far beyond the pale they've become hip again. In Brooklyn, men walk down Bedford Avenue looking like extras from *The Outsiders*. Gucci sent guys down the run way in white socks, embroidered loafers, and bleach-splattered denim. But you don't need to be a hipster or a model to pull this off. Just make sure you're turned out so well, it's clear you know exactly which rules you're breaking. —**Jon Roth**



**Rock 'Em, Sock 'Em** Previous page: Islington Twins Chuka and Dubem Okenkwo embody impeccable '60s Rude Boy style. Above: JFK and Jackie take in the America's Cup in 1962.

EDITORS' PICK

## SHOW YOUR STRIPES

• • • Socks are functional things: they protect your feet from your shoes and your shoes from your feet. But they can add a flash of personality, too. If you're not ready to try white ones, Smart Turnout offers eye-popping colors inspired by tonier schools and army regiments across the U.K. Once, these colors on a chap marked you as a member of the old-boys club. Now you can wear them even (especially) if you ain't. —Nick Sullivan



**Smart Turnout** socks, from top ($32 per pair; smartturnout.com): King's Royal Hussars, Royal Army Medical Corps, Queen's Royal Lancers, Charterhouse, Princess of Wales Royal Regiment, 9th/12th Royal Lancers, Household Division

SECRET SERVICE

## HERE'S TO THE IMPERFECT POLISH

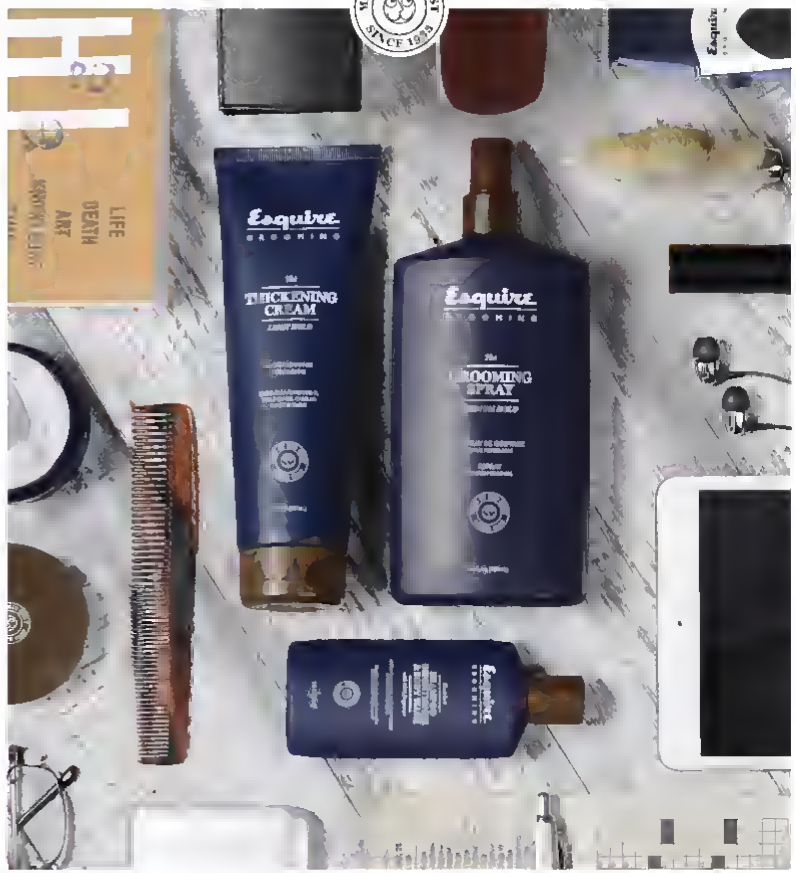
• • • Shoe polish is the easiest (and cheapest!) way to look like you've jumped a few pay grades, but polishing several pairs from heel to toe can feel like time wasted. Which is why we've been focusing on the toe caps lately. Rubbing in some Saphir ($20, hangerproject.com) adds shine but still maintains the nicks and scuffs that prove this isn't your first walk around the block. You want shoes with patina—and just a hint of polish. —J.R.








MAN AT HIS BEST SINCE 1933




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dedic d to
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eat



# WRIST CANDY

**Save your cash for that ISLAND VACATION and pick up an inexpensive WATCH that's OUTSIDE THE BOX**



• • There's something to be said for the milestone watch—one that might cost a couple paychecks but proves you've made it. Hold on to that, if only to remind you of the time you thought you'd "made it." But once you've got a few good watches, get one you can use without treating it like a 401(k). A knockaround watch you can wear to the beach or in a game of pickup basketball. Something plastic that's as bright as the paint job on a '70s-era Porsche and something that says you're not about to enter a urn "dick measuring" contest over the size of your hardware. When Bill Gates sports a Casio, the smart money says there's power in plastic. But don't wear one because he does—wear one because you don't have anything to prove. —J. R.

From top: Attack watch ($160) by **Swatch;** the Time Teller P ($60) by **Nixon;** Peptastic Sport Multifunction ($95) by **Fossil,** M [illegible] ($40) by **G-Shock;** Protector ($99) by **G Shock;** Sistem Freq ($150) by **Swatch**

photograph **Jeffrey Westbrook**



# 'SUCKER, PUNCHED UP

## THE NEW SEERSUCKER is more rock 'n' roll, less ROCKING CHAIR

• • • Seersucker is the official Fabric of Summer™ and for good reason. Its alternating smooth and puckered stripes help lift the fabric off your body, effectively creating tiny air ducts for cooling circulation. In the age before air-conditioning, it was the backbone of any warm-weather wardrobe, from colonial India to the American South.

But now that we *have* air conditioning, seersucker can feel dated—it brings to mind Atticus Finch sweating through his three-piece, or a pack of julep-slosh-ing good ol' boys in Derby costume. Lucky for you, designers are really testing what the fabric can do. The darker jackets above ditch the candy-striped white-and-baby-blue palette for a variety of tonal takes on navy. The lighter jackets are even more out there. Dubbed "French seersucker" by some, they're not really seersucker at all. Instead, the smooth cotton is striped with thick, slubby thread—stuff that's gnarled and knotty enough to echo the pucker of the original fabric but with a totally modern look.

Proof positive that classic fabrics never die—they just get reinvented. —J.R.

Jackets, from left: by **MP Massima Piombo** ($800); by **J.Crew** ($295); by **Caruso** (part of a suit, $2,200); by **Drake's** ($1,495); by **MP Massima Piombo** ($800); by **Ascot Chang** ($2,550). Tee ($185) by **Drake's**. T-shirt ($125) and trousers ($285) by **Bosa**. Sneakers ($350) by **Tu Boot New York**. Navitimer 01 watch ($7,965) by **Breitling**.



photograph **Clément Pascal**



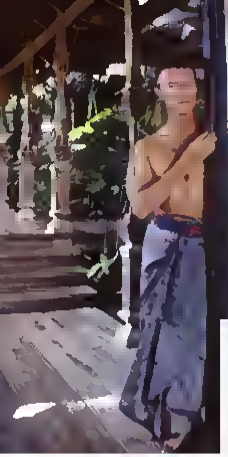


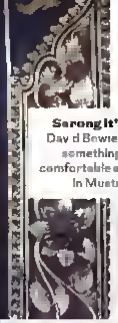
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**Sarong It's Right**
David Bowie slips into something more comfortable at his home in Mustique.



# THE ABROAD-ROBE

**Esquire fashion director NICK SULLIVAN has some advice on what to WEAR when you're SOMEWHERE else**

Travel has always been fashion inspiration for me, starting with my teenage holidays in the South of France. Was it the tasty food, the chic vacationers, or the endemic topless sunbathing that drew me most to that immortal coast? I wonder. Whatever the cause, it put the lust in my wanderlust and convinced me that travel should broaden my wardrobe as much as my mind.

I call it the Abroad-robe. You see it in the traditional *passeggiata* in Italy, where the population peacocks publicly every evening. The sense of rising collectively to the occasion is palpable. It's not just an Italian thing, either. It's all over the Mediterranean. I don't know the Albanian word for *passeggiata*, but I bet they have one.

Rising to the occasion abroad, however, is something at which Americans (and we Brits) historically do not shine. When we travel, we either adopt a humdrum, global preppy look—polo shirt, chinos, sneakers—or, even worse, we wear the clothes we'd normally wear on the sofa. Ugly Americans indeed. We can do better. I don't want to dress like a Frenchman or a Spaniard, but patriotism demands I raise my game on foreign soil.

Fortunately, fashion is in an escapist mood. Pattern is everywhere, in ethnic prints, stylized camo, and nautical stripes. Bright, bright colors are on the rise. There are saturated spice tones, electric yellows, and deep Neapolitan blues. And pattern and color really define the Abroad robe. If you won't wear it at home, you can always take it with you. Kean Etro's ikat-print linen pants (left) from his current collection are so badass, I'd book two weeks in Trancoso just so I could wear them. I wouldn't wear a light-colored suit to work, but look at Dries Van Noten's double-breasted version or the Lost Explorer's three-piece in dusty pink (right). I'd wear either of them without batting a lash in Naples, Italy (but not in Naples, Florida, where I would feel like Don Johnson). The trick is to dress for the destination.

Summer clothes give you license to cut loose wherever you may end up, a deliberate vacation from your regular mind-set. You may not look like a local, but you can damn well try. For all they know, a blush-colored blazer could be your trademark. ■

**LOCAL COLOR**
BRIGHT, MULTICOLORED LINEN PANTS LIKE THESE WON'T FLY IN THE CONCRETE JUNGLE BUT THEY BE A PERFECT FIT FOR THE TROPICS.

**WHEN IN NAPLES**
IT TAKES A LOT OF SWAGGER TO PULL OFF A CREAM-COLORED DOUBLE-BREASTED SUIT—UNLESS YOU'RE IN THE CITY THAT PRACTICALLY INVENTED IT

**NOSÉ SEASON**
A PINK BLAZER IS ANOTHER MEDITERRANEAN-INSPIRED MOVE (OR JUST TRY IT AT A GARDEN PARTY—BUT ALL FOREIGN PLACES ARE OVERSEAS)

T-shirt ($275)–trousers ($1,095) and sandals ($310) by **Etro;** braided bracelet ($175) and Tiger's Eye bracelet ($400) by **Esquire Men's Jewelry.**

Top: Jacket ($1,180) and trousers ($800) by **Dries Van Noten;** shirt ($70) by **Nautica;** Right: Jacket ($395) and trousers ($245) by **the Lost Explorer;** shoes ($525) by **O'Keeffe**

Portrait on Joe McKendry

**INSIDER TIP**

## THE SECRET TO WEARING A TIE IN SUMMER...

• • • Fat ties have seized power in Washington—these overstuffed slabs of silk favored by our CEO-in-Chief. No wonder guys with a good eye don't want to wear them. Beyond the obvious, they're not very comfortable. Before ties were stuffed with wool for a power-sausage look, they were available with barely any lining. Take this RRL version from a few years back. It's finer, lighter, and cooler in every sense. Because the last thing we need is more hotheads. —N.S.



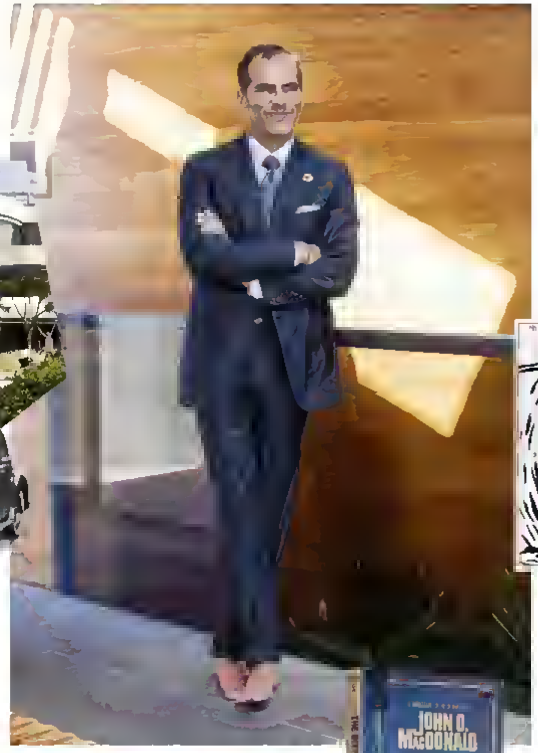
photographs: **Clément Pascal**

# HOW I DISCOVERED MY STYLE

MATT JACOBSON
56, Manhattan Beach, California

**FACEBOOK'S eighth employee (and head of market development) knows a good thing when he sees it. Here, he talks VINTAGE VOLKSWAGENS, his coat-and-tie dress code, and THE ONE THING he can't help hoarding.**







**Where it all began.** My dad was a beach guy, but he was super preppy. Brooks Brothers sack suit, repp tie, you know. He didn't need to wear a suit and tie, but he always did. That was my style reference, and it's been my thing ever since.

**His trademark.** When I went back to tech, I wanted to be taken seriously, and so I started wearing a coat and tie every day. And I get unbelievably good service everywhere I go. A friend of mine always says, "If you're wearing a jacket and tie and carrying a clipboard, you can get in anywhere."

**Bare minimal.** I apply a one-in, one-out policy. If I see something I want, it's got to be better than what I have. I love John Lobb shoes. I have a lot of them, but that's from over the last 20 years.

**Classic beauty.** I like things that show their use. I love that this Beetle [above] stayed together and wasn't turned into a Baja Bug or some kind of weird hot rod. I try to keep it as original as possible.

**On owning a brand.** We all wore Birdwell [Beach Britches] as kids. It's been family-owned for four generations, made in the same factory by a lot of the same people. It's nice to see a heritage brand thrive. When you wear Birdwell, it's like a wink that you're legit.

**By the book.** I've just gotten into these John D. MacDonald novels. He's this pulp-fiction writer from the '50s, and he wrote 21 books about this character named Travis McGee. It's not high fiction, but it's really fun.



**Surf's up.** Raymond Pettibon is from the next town over from Manhattan Beach, where I live. His brother was the guitarist in Black Flag, so Raymond did all of the flyers. That was my era, so Pettibon, particularly his surfers, is my thing.

**His one indulgence.** I scour eBay for these discontinued Levi's 514 off-white cords. I never understand why they don't bring them back. That's the only thing I hoard. That's the only thing I don't one-in, one-out.

—As told to **Jon Roth**

Clockwise from top right: A John Lobb double monk; a 1987 Raymond Pettibon drawing; a vintage John D. MacDonald paperback; Jacobson's '55 VW Beetle; and his Manhattan Beach home



portrait: **Elizabeth Lippman**

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WIDE FIT FOR
ULTIMATE COMFORT
DON'T LET YOUR FEET FEEL JET LAGGED OR SKIP A BEAT ON THE MAT WITH SKECHERS RELAXED FIT OR WIDE FOOTWEAR.
ROOMIER FIT
HOWIE LONG
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RELAXED FIT
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## SO YOU'RE NOT INTO LEATHER?

### Then get a belt with a bit more... BITE

• • • The woven belt is nothing new—we're sure your father had one—but we recently noticed it age n around the waist of Prince Harry as he left London's Soho House (on his arm Meghan Markle) Harry's blue braided belt ran no risk of upstaging his g ilfriend..but it was still a statement on a guy whose family is not exactly known for its fashion daring And it got us thinking: Why stop at blue? In a season when every style rule loosens up a few notches, opting for a brighter belt is an easy eye-catching switch up From there, it's a matter of personal taste Nautica makes a red braided version that evokes classic New England.. Missoni's trademark zigzag pattern channels ethnic textiles Or go all in w th Anderson's multicolored belt (which should match everything, because it's got every color) Pick your favorite and tuck away your day-to day leather belt for a couple months—it deserves a vacation, too. —J.R

Belt [illegible]elt by **Sandro** ($78) by **Nautica** ($40)· by **Isaia** ($390) by **Missoni** ($775) by **Anderson's** ($175 mrporter.com) B is ($905) —**Christian Louboutin**



photograph **Jeffrey Westbrook**


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# EXCESS BAGGAGE

## What to do when you look like you pulled an ALL-NIGHTER—but didn't

Team Trump is looking tired. Consider U.S. Defense Secretary General "Mad Dog" Mattis. At his confirmation hearing in January, the bags under his eyes looked overstuffed. Has he been losing sleep?

Maybe. But bags aren't just a symptom of nights spent pondering our nation's embattled future. (We feel you there, Mad Dog.) They're mostly a product of age and genetics. And no one wants them. In 2015, eyelid surgery was the second most popular treatment for guys after that old reliable, the nose job.

"It happens to every body, though some are more predisposed," says Manhattan-based plastic surgeon Darrick Antell. "And if you start looking tired, people think you can't do your job well." If you're in the early stages, some filler just under the circles will even out the gradation. If you're a full-blown Mattis, a surgeon can go in under the lower eyelid and remove or reposition the fat there to make the bags disappear.

Quick fixes to reduce swelling include cucumber slices, or even a swipe of Preparation H to tighten the skin, but there's no salvation in a bottle. "Topical creams won't fix under-eye fat pads," says dermatologist Paul Jarrod Frank, who uses Fraxel, a skin-resurfacing treatment, as a nonsurgical eye lift. Fixing this takes extra firepower. Dr. Antell did it himself, back in his thirties. "It was one of the best things I ever did," he says. "Besides marrying my wife." —J. R.

**NOT SO SWELL**

**YOU CAN REDUCE PUFFINESS UNDER THE EYES WITH COOLING CUCUMBERS OR PREPARATION H (YES REALLY). BUT THOSE ARE JUST STOPGAPS FOR A BIGGER ISSUE**






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AND ALL HIS WAR MEDALS.

GET YOUR EDGE®




He's going to remember your face, one way or another.

Our lubricating molecules enhance razor glide for a smooth shave with less irritation.

# DOUBLE THE DENIM

**Author MARLON JAMES remembers the first time he saw denim on denim DONE RIGHT—and how he's COPIED IT ever since**






**DENIM BLUES**
KICKING BACK BETWEEN SESSIONS IN 1973, MARVIN GAYE ACCENTED PERFECTLY MATCHED DENIM WITH A BRIGHT RED HAT AND OLIVE SHIRT

Shirt ($285) by **Levi's Vintage Clothing.**

Denim on denim is swagger in excelsis. A don't try this at-home mistake that I always make at home, where everything looks cooler in a bedroom mirror. The first time I tried it, on a Saturday in Kingston in 1985, I looked like the one jackass in Jamaica who wasn't aware that Halloween was an American holiday. Of course I was doomed to fail. At 14, I was cool but had no groove, and denim on denim was over before it even began.

The problem was that denim on denim always walked that line between cocky and tacky. Especially '70s denim on '70s rock stars: open shirt, hairy chest aroar, that trouser-snake hip shake. The look needed a serious counterbalance of cool to pull off. Enter Marvin Gaye. I didn't even notice him until my beat-making friends started sampling *Trouble Man*. But the record that caused trouble in my wardrobe was *Let's Get It On*. Just like that, there he was, dressed in denim on denim, a bold-as-fuck fashion move on his boldest ever album. It made perfect sense—if you were going to tell America that she sure loves to ball, you had better come with serious stylistic attitude. He looked like he wasn't even trying, which was the hardest part to pull off.

Usually the rule with denim on denim is don't, and if you do, at least mismatch. But that was a rule for mere mortals, and there's no mere in Gaye. Not only did his shirt and pants match exactly, but he punctuated the look with a red ski cap on top, like a period. Shirt open.

Fast-track to 2005, and I'm heading to a Brooklyn gallery. I'm walking down Clinton Avenue, combat boots hitting the pavement, denim boot-cut jeans and denim cowboy shirt, both the same shade of blue. The comma: a gray T-shirt. The period: a red-green-and-gold Rasta cap to pack in bushy dreadlocks. Coming through the headphones: Marvin Gaye. ■

## PULLING IT OFF

There's more than one way to get it right

*Go indigo dark or sun-bleached light, or else experiment in the middle ground.*
*Match your shirt to your jeans exactly—per Mr. Gaye—or toy with the contrast.*
*And whatever you do, remember that the accessories matter.*




GOOD JEANS

## ACNE STARTS OVER



Way back in 1997, before Acne sold everything from briefs to blazers, cofounder Jonny Johansson started out with denim, making 100 pairs of jeans that would come to define the brand. Twenty years later, he's starting all over with the Blå Konst collection, a denim overhaul with three cuts (baggy, skinny, and straight) in a range of washes. "I wanted to purify our denim, edit the range, and refresh the pieces," Johansson says. We say Acne has you covered from hip to cuff.
—Michael Stefanov



photograph **Ben Goldstein**

**Roy Cohn was once the MOST FEARED LAWYER in New York City. A ruthless master of DIRTY TRICKS, he smeared the reputations of his political enemies, helped send the Rosenbergs to the electric chair, and had more than one Mafia don on speed dial. But his most enduring legacy is DONALD TRUMP, whom he took under his wing in the 1970s. In this excerpt from KEN AULETTA'S 1978 ESQUIRE PROFILE, we meet the man who tutored the president in THE DARK ARTS OF GOSSIP, POWER, AND POLITICS.**



# My Name Is ROY COHN, and I MADE



## THIS man

The more public Roy [illegible]ts, the more cheerfully outrageous he appears. Recently he exploded on the front page, bringing a stockholder suit against Henry Ford, charging that Ford [illegible]ed bribes and siphoned company funds for his personal living expenses. That made the evening news when he appeared, with [illegible]ee, as the attorney for Wallace Lal[illegible]e, former head of Hertz's New York [illegible]e, who was fighting Justice Department charges involving his role in illegal bugging and breakins. Unlike most lawyers, he is not press shy. "I'm a ham," he boasts. When gossip columnist Liz Smith reported that Roy was representing Christina Ford in her divorce action against Henry, Christina issued a denial, which Smith duly printed. "Then I had a correspondence with him," says Smith, "where he said he was representing her." She believes Roy leaked the original column item to her through a friend for publicity. Cohn denies it, admitting only that he had met with Christina. He promised to produce the Liz Smith letter to disprove her claim but never did. No matter. "The more you say he's a ruthless bastard," chuckles his law partner **Stanley Friedman,** "the more it helps." Has publicity, much of it negative, helped? "All of this has done me a lot of good, there's no question about it," admits Cohn. "I'd be a liar if I denied it. It's given me a reputation for being tough, a reputation for being a winner." A former assistant U.S. attorney who still believes Roy should be behind bars puts it another way: "He's the only person I've ever known as a prosecutor who enjoyed being indicted. He enjoys the limelight."

The publicity almost guarantees that Roy's phone calls will be returned. "I can get attention, no question about it," says Cohn. "They know my name. The usual response

Ken Auletta discussed this profile with Alex Belth on the Esquire Classic podcast in December. Auletta's commentary has been condensed and edited.

**1. Ken Auletta:** "I was intrigued by Cohn because here's a guy who, at the age of 26, was counsel to Senator Joseph McCarthy. And when McCarthy fell, so did Roy Cohn. But then he came back, and he was this ruthless, brilliant lawyer. He was really a tough guy, and I said, 'He would really be fascinating to profile.'"

**2.** "Roy Cohn decided he did not want to talk to me. I then told his partner Stanley Friedman, 'Okay. I am going to start calling all the people who know Roy Cohn, including his enemies, and I don't think it's in his interest for me to write a story that's one-sided, just talking to people who are his enemies. I want to talk to him and find out what he's about and what he thinks.' And within a day, I got a call from Roy Cohn."

is, 'What did I do?'" His standard technique is to dispatch a threatening letter on behalf of a client—"Hey, mister. This is now the eleventh hour before the monster strikes!" is how Roy puts it.

"Roy symbolizes viciousness in protecting a client or going after someone who needs viciousness to right a wrong," says his boyhood friend Bill Fugazy. He fights his cases as if they were his own. It is war. If he feels his adversary has been unfair, it is war to the death. No white flags. No Mr. Nice Guy. Prospective clients who want to kill their husband, torture a business partner, break the government's legs, hire Roy Cohn. He is a **legal executioner**[2]—the toughest, meanest, loyalest, vilest, and one of the most brilliant lawyers in America. He is not a very nice man.

Once when a husband tried to pull a fast one and ordered two moving vans to sneak up to collect furniture at 7:00 A.M., his hysterical wife called Roy. "What should I do?" she screamed. "Sit tight," he calmed her. "I'll call the cops." He had the husband thrown in jail. "I must have had fifty men call me over the years and ask, 'We hear Roy Cohn is going to represent my wife. Would you make sure he doesn't rough us up?'" says Fugazy. "The mere sending of a letter from Roy Cohn has saved us a lot of money," says builder **Donald Trump.**[4] "When people know that Roy is involved, they'd rather not get involved in the lawsuits and everything else that's involved." Publishers, TV networks, editors, are accustomed to receiving preemptory phone calls or threatening letters from Cohn and cringe at the court costs of taking him on.

Cohn is a unique kind of bully—fearless. During the Army-McCarthy hearings in 1954, he lunged at and tried to punch his cocounsel, Robert Kennedy. Considering Cohn's lack of agility—at a recent Yankee game when everyone in the box ducked to avoid third baseman Graig Nettles chasing a foul ball, Roy stood up and got punched in the neck—he is fortunate people interceded before he could swing at Kennedy. "I know that if I were in a fight," says publicist Howard Rubenstein, who has his own collection of influential clients, "I'd want Roy Cohn in my corner. I've seen people in divorce fights say, 'Oh, my God, it's Roy Cohn.' It's like in the wild West, when one of the hired gunmen with forty notches in his gun strides into the bar and everyone ducks or says, 'I better get out of here.' He's not the Lone Ranger in a white suit. His reputation as a bad guy willing to stand up and fight helps him."




**HE IS A LEGAL EXECUTIONER—THE TOUGHEST, MEANEST, LOYALEST, VILEST, AND ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT LAWYERS IN AMERICA.**



*Cohn hosts a breakfast meeting at the townhouse office of his law firm, Saxe Bacon & Bolan. He died of AIDS in 1986.*

To his clients, Roy is like a **faith healer.**[5] "He's almost a mother's helper," says builder Sam LeFrak. "He doesn't tell you he's going to lose, like most lawyers." When the federal government was suing the Trump organization for discriminating against minorities in their housing projects, Don Trump searched for a lawyer. "They all said, 'You have a good case, but it's a sticky thing,'" remembers Trump. Then he met Cohn for the first time at a party, explained his predicament, and was thrilled when Roy instantly declared, "Oh, you'll win hands down!" Sitting beside him at "21," Republican socialite Sheila Mosler, whose divorce he is handling, exclaims, "To me, he's like a brother."

Looking at Cohn closely, one is not surprised that "21" would shove him in a corner. Hooded, bloodshot eyes give him the appearance of a convict. A deep scar wiggles like a river down the center of a thick nose. Lines streak from either side of the nose to the mouth, which he lubricates with lizardlike strokes from his tongue. Short hair hugs his head, which is balding on top. The hairline is neatly shaved to form an arch above his ears, extending down and around the entire back of his head. Two thin, red lines curve around each of Roy's ears, the result, he admits, of cosmetic surgery to correct "bags" and "heavy lines." He looks like a killer. Except for the body and the deportment. He's only five feet eight inches tall, 144 pounds. The suit he is wearing this day is dark blue, slightly tucked at the waist, with a faint stripe. A modest paisley tie fades into a nondescript striped shirt. His mannerisms—the licking of the lips, the waving wrists—are **effete.**[6]

A legend has grown up about Roy Cohn's courtroom appearances. Judges and others marvel that he can speak for hours without notes and has total recall, including the ability to recite the page number of testimony given months before. It is said by many that he will lie, cheat, invent facts, smoke with bullying rage, or ooze with charm—whatever is **required.**[7] Says one of his Columbia Law School classmates who loathes him, "There is a feeling in the legal profession that he is a formidable adversary not because he's a brilliant lawyer but because he will stop at nothing." Dick Schaap, the WNBC sportscaster, met Cohn for the first time in a divorce proceeding with Schaap's wife, whom Roy is representing. "My wife would point at me and say, 'He's a liberal, Roy. He hates your guts!'" recalls Schaap. Which was true. He remembers walking into Cohn's office and spying a picture of Roy whispering into Senator McCarthy's ear. Schaap fumed. Yet he found himself surprised that Roy acted like "a standup comic. His timing was perfect. He was charming." What about his reputation as a killer? "It hasn't gotten that far yet," he says. "I may not be laughing long."

"His ability as a public speaker is probably the best in the business," certifies James LaRossa, who enjoys a reputation as one of the best criminal lawyers in the business. But, says a prominent attorney who has worked beside Roy in cases, "I could make a great trial lawyer out of him. He is spread too thin. He's really not a good trial lawyer because he doesn't have time to do the homework, and it shows in his cross-examination of witnesses." Sometimes it shows in his briefs. In the Henry Ford class action suit, Roy wildly charged that a "Morris" Taubman received inside information about a Detroit land deal from his friend Henry Ford. The man's name is A. Alfred Taubman. The papers also charged that Ford gifted model agency business to the Leslie Fargo Agency, where Kathleen DuRoss, "a person in a close personal relationship with the defendant, Ford, has an interest." The owner of the agency signed an affidavit swearing that DuRoss has never owned an interest in her business.

Cohn's fabled self-assurance is on display today. Without notes he plucks from his memory the page number of past testimony, marshals his arguments precisely, pausing only to step back, to slide his arms behind his back, and pace before the justices. When Roy is finished, Assistant D.A. Jerrold Tannenbaum, his adversary, rises. "Your Honor!" he booms, voice throbbing. "There is no way this court can determine this appeal if the record is falsified." Roy sits motionless, staring straight ahead, arms folded, intently biting his cheek. As soon as his young foe pauses, Roy leaps from his chair, never once taking his eyes from the judges, nudging, almost pushing Tannenbaum from the podium. "I think he owes this court an apology!" he barks. But there is no conviction in Roy's voice. He is used to being attacked. What other lawyers would consider a blight on their integrity, Roy considers perfectly **normal.**[8] When Henry Ford's attorneys documented in open court the times Roy's ethics have been questioned by judges, Roy shrugged it off. "He actually thinks it's normal to be reprimanded by a judge," says one of Ford's shocked attorneys.

What this attorney doesn't understand is that to Roy the courtroom is not a forum where gentlemanly adversaries gather. It is a battlefield: an arena where his enemies, he believes, try to kill him.

It's a grubby **world.**[9] Roy thinks. With the exception of his extended family of friends and associates, it's all a jungle out there. "The reason I love dogs," he says, "is that you know they're sincere." Roy's life shaping experiences with the outside world teach that it is composed of hostile forces: the Rosenbergs and other spies when he was a young prosecutor; Communists and dupes when he was with McCarthy; the federal government when he was brought to trial in the Sixties. His life has been consumed by controversy, fights, feuds. The attacks against Roy Cohn by his enemies have sometimes been no less vicious than his. Therefore: Everyone lies, smears, covers up, protects their friends. The rules of the game don't count as much as **winning.**[10] ■



*In 1984 with Cohn by his side, Trump announced a $3 billion lawsuit against the NFL.*



*To read the full length story, "Don't Mess with Roy Cohn," visit Esquire.com.*

3 "I thought he would hate the piece. The legal executioner? In fact, he was very happy with it. He called me up and said, 'Ken, I loved your piece. How do I get 500 copies of the magazine?' I was so disappointed! But often when you do a profile of someone, they don't know what to think until they start hearing from friends and associates and family. He obviously heard that it was a negative piece, so he started attacking me. He would attack me regularly, which I wore as a badge of honor."

4 "Trump at the time said that Roy Cohn was a mentor of his. He learned from Roy Cohn that you don't settle you sue. You have deeper pockets than most of the people you're gonna sue, and if you haul me as your lawyer, we'll walk them out."

5 "Loyalty is real important. Roy expected it from people, but he gave it to people too. If you got in trouble on you needed something, he was the killer you wanted by your side. He was so ruthless, but I wouldn't diminish the notion that he had some human qualities that were very appealing—loyalty foremost among them."

6 "Clay Felker, the editor of the magazine, would quiz me. 'Is he gay? You gonna ask him...is he gay?' I always avoided the conversation with Felker. I saved the question for my last interview. I walked in with my tape recorder going. I wanted to delve Cohn what he did to many innocent people at the McCarthy hearings. Unlike him, it was private. I wasn't gonna share it. But I just wanted to watch him squirm. And he did, and it was a great pay. One morning, at my last interview with Roy in his brownstone, he came down in a pink robe. We were having breakfast, waffles. I said to him, 'How do you feel about equal rights for gay people?' And for the first time in all the interviews I had done with Roy, he answered was gray. He said, 'Well, you know, I think it's a really complicated subject.' And then I said, 'Mr. Cohn, are you gay?' My tape recorder was going. And again, gray area. He didn't quite answer the question. When I handed the piece in to Felker, he said, 'There's nothing about him being gay here.' And I said, 'No.' He said, 'Why? Did you ask him?' I said, 'I did.' 'Why haven't you put it in the piece?' I said, 'Because if I put that in the piece, I would be doing exactly what Roy Cohn did in the 50s. By pulling up the question, you're basically suggesting that something is wrong if you are gay.'"

7 "He was a good trial lawyer. The histrionics are part of being a good trial lawyer. And he had no shame about telling lies or pushing something that's only half true. Normally you interview people and you spend time with them, and they're embarrassed about things that they've done. 'Never with Roy Cohn. Ever.'"

8 "You don't see Roy Cohn, you don't see Donald Trump, depressed. They are not inner people; they are not people who reflect and soul search. They're comfortable with their shallow selves."

9 "I'm sure some of it stemmed from the McCarthy years, where he was basically defeated, he thought, by the Harvards and the elite wealthy people. In fact, if you go back and look at that, he was defeated by conservative senators and President Eisenhower. Republicans who were embarrassed by him, as well as by the so-called elites. But he had this chip on his shoulder the way Nixon had a chip on his shoulder."

10 "You interview people, and some you don't like, or you don't trust. But you also see virtues in them. They're human beings, and you're a human being. So you don't make moral judgments.

"With Roy I made a moral judgment. I thought this was the most reprehensible human being I had ever met—not just written about. And I didn't want anything to do with him. But he called me up and asked if I would sign a copy of the Esquire piece. He sent a driver, so I signed it. I'll say no. To Roy Cohn, who I wish I had punched. Ken Auletta."

# You DIDN'T HEAR IT from Me...

**SECRETS matter. What's more, they're SEXY. Maybe that's why we love to REVEAL THEM.** *By Dwight Garner*



I'm bad at keeping secrets. My safe is easy to crack. I wish it were otherwise. Don't share with me your confidence. I won't leak it today or tomorrow or even next month. But sometime within the calendar year—unless your secret is dire and would cause you to be fired or shamed and culled from the herd—chances are I will, absolutely without intending to, spill it somewhere, probably to another friend, most likely in a bar, with the whispered stricture that no one else must be told. I'm not the Julian Assange of my social circle. But my bar for what constitutes privileged information seems to be set lower than some people's.

Sometimes I fear this is because I am a drinking man. I tend to heed Christopher Hitchens's rule about cocktail-hour martinis—that, like breasts, one is too few and three too many. At dinner, I like wine and conversation, both unoaked. If the topics don't verge on those that etiquette writers tell us to avoid (sex, death, religion, politics, money, drugs, envy, gossip, gotters, Gitanes), I fear the evening has been a sand-colored washout, a rebroadcast of *A Prairie Home Companion* rather than a pinging Tracy Letts play. Little wonder that I seem to wake up twice a month at 4:00 A.M. groaning, "Jesus, fuck, what did I say last night?"

It's not entirely the alcohol. I suspect I am imperfect with secrets because I am constitutionally incapable of keeping my own. I'm something of an open book. I've got a close friend, a gifted and frighteningly successful writer, who nonetheless considers me comparatively a sphinx. "I'm like a platter of cold cuts," she likes to declare. "Take a slice of something. I'm that wide open." This is when I kick myself for not better monetizing, in the souk that is the American publishing world, whatever skeletons remain in my closet. I tend to keep my secrets in the cellar until they've matured and become anecdotes. I agree with the brilliant and recently rediscovered writer Lucia Berlin, who has a narrator say in one short story, "I don't mind telling people awful things if I can make them funny."

My wife has a look she gives me at dinner parties when my confessions verge on spilling secrets she herself would like to keep. These can include hints about our sex life and bank account; oddly, one of these is always in dire shape while the other is humming along. We cannot get them in sync. Her look in these situations is a gaze of pure horror. It's one I imagine she would give me if I pulled up my shirt to show off my new Sean Spicer chest tattoo, or if she caught me drinking wine coolers while masturbating to old Henry Kissinger interviews on YouTube.

I got that look not long ago when, at dinner with friends, I began to talk about the wild-growing chanterelles we'd discovered in a damp field while hiking a local mountain. We brought enough of these saffron yellow and burnt orange colored delicacies home to feed them breakfast, lunch, and dinner to every extra at the Metropolitan Opera, and we delivered small paper sacks of them to everyone we knew. When it comes to bonanzas of wild mushrooms, you're obliged to share. What you are not supposed to share is exactly where you found them. This is part of the solemn wild-mushroom omertà. My wife grew up in a foodie family that went wild-mushroom hunting as regularly as mine turned left into the McDonald's drive-thru. I did not understand the mushroom thing. I was on the verge of disclosing their GPS coordinates when I got the look. It said to me: You are about to become Fredo. I backed off. Yet I didn't want to. Like Timothy Leary and Johnny Appleseed, I am compelled to share.

All of us need our secrets; they're at the core of our being. Like almost everyone else I know, I recently reread George Orwell's novel *1984*, which has taken on new meaning in the age of Trump (to speak of a different sort of saffron yellow and burnt orange thing) and his administration's totalitarian impulses. The scene that burned itself into my mind is the one in which Winston Smith, the novel's protagonist and a worker at the Ministry of Truth, begins to keep a diary so as to have any sort of secret of his own. He knows he'll be found out, that he is committing thoughtcrime, but he writes anyway, over and over, "Down with Big Brother."

**MY WIFE HAS A LOOK SHE GIVES ME AT DINNER PARTIES WHEN MY CONFESSIONS VERGE ON SPILLING SECRETS SHE HERSELF WOULD LIKE TO KEEP.**

Secrets matter. What's more, they are sexy. Secret rendezvous, secret recipes, and secret doors are excellent things, even if secret sauce, secret underground bunkers, and Bob Dylan appearing in commercials for Victoria's Secret are not. "Secrets," William Gibson wrote in his novel *Spook Country*, "are the very root of cool." Herman Melville was more cynical about the cool factor. "It is the easiest thing in the world," he wrote in *Moby-Dick*, "for a man to look as if he had a great secret in him."

We all carry around, as if in invisible backpacks, a board of secrets. Science has begun to tell us that clutching them too closely causes stress and harms sleep. Our brains are wired for truth telling. Cognitively, it is just as complicated to keep other people's secrets, no matter how loyal you are. "Our minds have a limited capacity to process information," the psychologist Art Markman has written. "So if you are engaged in a complex discussion, it may be difficult to keep track of what you're allowed to say and what you aren't, which can lead you to divulge information you shouldn't." Freud put this a bit differently: "No mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his fingertips, betrayal oozes out of him at every pore." Freud didn't say it, but he was also talking about the joy of gossip, to which I am as addicted as the average human who cares about his species.

Secrets are dangerous when they allow us to do harm or behave unethically. Lyndon Johnson hid the horrors of Vietnam from the American people because, he said privately, "If you have a mother-in-law with only one eye, and she has it in the center of her forehead, you don't keep her in the living room." A president's tax returns, like his wars, cannot be kept from scrutiny.

Harold Ross, the founding editor of *The New Yorker* magazine, was said to be awful at keeping secrets. He was like the character in the Tom Stoppard play who says, "I will take his secret to the grave, telling people I meet on the way." Ross's successor, William Shawn, on the other hand, was said to have an impenetrable vault. Shawn was so successful at keeping secrets that it wasn't until after his death that we learned of his long-time affair, while he was married, with the writer Lillian Ross. I am trying to become a bit less like Ross, even though he was the livelier of the two, and a bit more like Shawn, mistresses aside. I am trying to get a bit better at keeping other people's secrets, even as I become ever freer with my own.

I am not talking about deploying my secrets for their shock-and-awe value. I've grown to deplore how American memoirs have become, in Calvin Trillin's phrase, "an atrocity arms race." But the people I like to be around are the open ones. I was raised Catholic, and the forced confessions of my youth were about purging sinful behavior. As an adult, with friends, confession is healing. Our predicaments are compared and found to be, at the end of the day, relatively. It's disloyal, I've long felt, to keep important things from friends and spouses.

Kingsley Amis was talking not about secrets but about good bars when he wrote, "The human race has not devised any way of dissolving barriers, getting to know the other chap fast, breaking the ice, that is one tenth as handy and efficient as letting you and the other chap, or chaps, cease to be totally sober at about the same rate in agreeable surroundings." But what he is saying about these places is this: They're where we can let our guard down. What floods in is humanity. ■

# Mark Cuban GETS LOUD

**Politics? NBA refs? Your product pitch? He has an opinion. And it will likely be bold, but it'll also be smart. ADAM GRANT TALKS to the brash SHARK TANK star and Dallas Mavericks owner about the ideas that shape him, from his take on ball hogs to the importance of AFTER-WORK DRINKS.**



**LET IT ALL OUT**
*If you've observed Cuban courtside during a Mavericks game then you're aware this is his natural state*

## THE DOSSIER

**Age:** 58
**Net worth:** $3.4 billion
**Schools attended:** University of Pittsburgh, Indiana University Bloomington
**First big thing:** Sold Broadcast.com in 1999 for $5.7 billion in Yahoo! stock
**Philanthropic efforts:** The Fallen Patriot Fund, which helps the families of U.S. military personnel who were killed or seriously injured during Operation Iraqi Freedom

You probably know of Mark Cuban in one way or another. As an entrepreneur, he was a pioneer in streaming radio over the Internet. As a venture capitalist, he was an early investor in Box and makes lots of unconventional bets on ABC's *Shark Tank*. And as the owner of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks, let's just say he isn't shy about speaking his mind.

I'm an organizational psychologist and Wharton professor. In my book *Originals*, I explored the habits of successful nonconformists—people who champion new ideas instead of following the crowd. So naturally I was excited to talk to Cuban in this new column, which celebrates the truly creative among us.

**Adam Grant: You've called passing on Uber your biggest investing mistake. Where did you go wrong—and how has your decision-making changed since?**

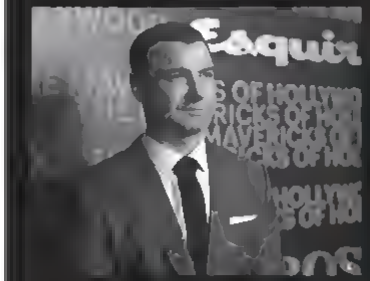
**Mark Cuban:** It hasn't really changed, I just missed it. It happens, in that I saw the risk of dealing with transporta-

Continued ▸

photograph **Rainer Hosch**











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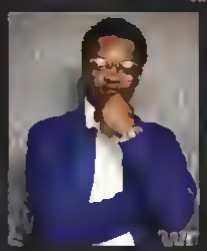














**ESQUIRE AND HUGO BOSS 'HOLLYWOOD MAVERICKS'**

Esquire and Hollywood's elite honored James Corden and the Mavericks of Hollywood on February 8, 2017 at the Sunset Tower in Los Angeles, CA. Guests dined on passed hors d'oeuvres and sipped cocktails as they danced to music by Grammy-nominated DJ Zane Lowe.

**A.** Lev Schreiber **B.** Sunset Tower Hotel **C.** Edgar Ramirez **D.** Michael Polish, Kate Bosworth **E.** Cast/crew: James Corden **F.** Taylor Sheridan, Ian Bohen **G.** Anthony Lucia, James Corden, Jay Fielden, Jack Essig **H.** Michael Heiney, Matthew Weiner, Jay Fielden **I.** DJ The Chicago Kid **J.** Malin Åkerman






Continued tion bureaucracies in each city and thought we should discuss what that meant to UberCab first. [Uber co-founder] Travis [Kalanick] went out and got other folks, and that was the end of it. I don't know that I learned a lesson—just happens sometimes.

**AG: Intuition is famously unreliable. It's basically subconscious pattern recognition, and it's never clear whether the patterns you've seen in the past will hold in the future. How do you know when to trust your gut?**

MC: I always check my hole card. I trust but verify by doing my homework. The exception to that is smaller deals where I might just wing it, because these days I get lazy sometimes.

**"YOU HAVE TO BE AHEAD OF THE CURVE IN SOME TECHNOLOGY AND PROVE TO ME YOU KNOW IT COLD AND KNOW HOW TO APPLY IT. THE ONLY THING THAT STANDS OUT IS DEMONSTRABLE EXPERTISE."**

**AG: Bad is often stronger than good. The negative impact of a terrible cofounder outweighs the positive impact of a great one. When I'm building my founding team, what should I make sure I avoid?**

MC: Someone with the same skill set as you. Someone who doesn't have a quality or skill that you find valuable. Someone whose work ethic doesn't match yours.

**AG: What kinds of pitches are you most tired of seeing?**

MC: The "Uber of something."

**AG: What would you say is the most undervalued company in tech right now, and why?**

MC: Amazon. It's the world's greatest start-up. It continually invests in new ideas and new technologies. No one does it better.

**AG: There's evidence from the NBA that a strong team player adds 60 percent more value than a ball hog. How do you gauge whether a player is more of a giver or a taker?**

MC: There are any number of factors. It's a team game. It's not whether they pass or shoot more; it's whether they are doing what the coach asks them to do. There are some guys who are so good that you want them to shoot every time they touch the ball. The problem is when a guy sees himself as filling one role and the coach has something else in mind.

**AG: You led a major turnaround of the Mavs. Of all the innovations that you introduced, which one has been most underappreciated?**

MC: Not trading Dirk [Nowitzki]. But beyond the obvious, when I came in, there were no player development coaches. I brought in ten former players to help our players develop their game. I remember having to explain to the sports media that we spent more on support of our personal computers and software than we did developing our most important employees: our players. That paying former players and specialists to help improve the skill sets of our guys was just common sense. Now every team has a staff of player development coaches. No one had done it before us.

**AG: Which NBA rule would you change to make the game more fair? More fun?**

MC: I would get rid of the clear-path foul. It wastes a lot of time and isn't a deterrent to fouling. I would also get rid of the infection control rule. It was a mistake to bring it in the nineties, and it's still a mistake today.

**AG: If I wanted to work for you, how would I go about getting your attention and persuading you to hire me?**

MC: You have to be ahead of the curve in some technology and prove to me you know it cold and know how to apply it. The only thing that stands out is demonstrable expertise.

**AG: On *Shark Tank*, you're often the first or last to make an offer. What's the deal?**

MC: I like to listen to the questions and answers from all the other sharks. It's not a negotiating tactic; it's a way to learn as much as possible about the company and entrepreneur.

**AG: When you came to speak at Wharton, you invited a big group of students out for drinks afterward. Why? Was it your way of continuing the Rookie Club, which you started in your twenties at Mellon Bank?**

MC: Absolutely. Every school, organization, company has its own culture, expertise, and attitude. I like to experience as much of it as I can. It keeps me from being isolated at all levels.

**AG: You've gotten fired from or quit multiple jobs. When people go through that and then have to explain it in their next job interviews, what should they say?**

MC: The truth.

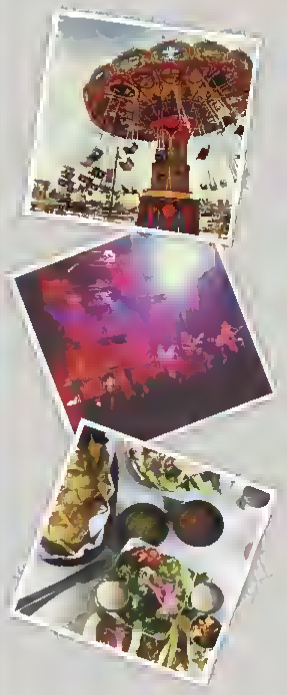
**AG: You once managed a Dairy Queen for a few hours after saying that you wouldn't hire the NBA's head of officiating to manage a Dairy Queen. Any lessons learned about management?**

MC: Making a curlicue soft swirl is hard. Make sure the people you hire can do the job.

**AG: If [fellow shark] Kevin O'Leary runs in Canada, what kind of prime minister would he make?**

MC: A smarter Donald Trump with some compassion, however that translates.

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# Andrew Ross SORKIN

**The *New York Times* financial columnist, cohost of *Squawk Box*, author of *TOO BIG TO FAIL*, and cocreator of *BILLIONS* on why he carries no cash, his biggest financial fear, and overpaying the TOOTH FAIRY**




**I carry zero cash.** I'm all cards, all the time. Because I try to be Esquire-fashionable, I have one of those thin little wallets with a debit card, a personal credit card, and a corporate card. If I was going to get mugged on the street, it'd be a real problem because I have no cash to give.

**Twenty percent is my baseline tip.** If the service is great and it's a small bill, then maybe I'll go to 25 or more. I'm less inclined to go higher than 20 if it's a big bill. I also hate the taxis that force you to pay 20 percent, but that's a whole separate issue.

**My wife handles the money,** even though I'm ostensibly supposed to be someone who covers finance. But I look at the accounts; I have every app on my phone. Plus, 90 percent of it is automated now. I'm also a terrible negotiator. I'm not good at the ask. My wife is the heavy. Don't call your wife the heavy, by the way.

**The original value of a tooth was a dollar,** but then I found out that we were under market. So we went to five. But we also had one boy lose two teeth first and then the second boy was very sad that he hadn't lost his teeth, so we gave him ten dollars, which may have created a bad trend.

**I'm one of those people who think everything could end tomorrow.** I think, *If I had no job, how long could we subsist?* Growing up, I don't want to say we were a family of cheapskates, but we were frugal. I'm sure we never had powdered milk, but I remember my mother joking about powdered milk once—I'd just seen powdered milk on something like *Diff'rent Strokes*—and thinking, *Goodness, we're going to have to have powdered milk! I totally* feel anxiety about money. I'm always aware of it. Years ago, I used to be cheaper and would actually take my coins to the Coinstar at the supermarket.

**I always wanted to be a little entrepreneur.** My first job—I was probably twelve, thirteen years old—was being a waiter at sleepaway camp. I used to ask to wait on the doctors' table, and I would convince them that it was a practice to tip, even though it really wasn't. At the end of the week, I'd get ten dollars, fifty dollars—I remember getting a hundred dollars one night. A hundred dollars inside a boys' sleepaway camp could buy you a lot of chicken wings and pizza.

**I pay off my credit card every month.** I'd freak if I got a late fee. I hate to be judgmental, but I would judge a person in debt more harshly than a cheapskate because it goes to my sense of responsibility with money.

**My greatest regret is not buying an apartment earlier.** I'd look at places and think, *Oh, I should do this,* but then I'd do the math and get really anxious. I was single back then, so I thought, *I don't need to do this,* but given the craziness of New York City real estate, that is a regret.

**Money does not buy taste or happiness, but it makes certain things easier.** And making certain things easier could, on the whole, make you marginally happier. I know lots of people who have gobs of money who are relatively unhappy people. But it's probably better to have some than none.

**The numbers have changed over the years.** People used to think that you could average 10 percent a year on your money, which meant that if you had $10 million in the bank, you could make $1 million a year. Today, it's hard to say what $10 million could reliably throw off, probably, after tax, $200,000 to $300,000. So—and I'm using $10 million as an example—the world's changed, and the world may change again in the next five years. I remember my grandfather always telling me, "Andrew, you've got to buy bonds." That would not be a good idea today.

**I've never understood why people buy food at the movie theater.** I'm the guy who'll go across the street to Duane Reade and stuff my pockets and try to sneak in. Also, my one bone of contention with my wife is that she likes to buy water. But I've learned to love her acquisition of water.

—*As told to Michael Hainey*

**WHAT'S IN MY WALLET**
*Zero cash plus three cards equals "Esquire-fashionable."*



photograph **Henry Leutwyler**

PROMOTION

# STYLE AGENDA



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Esquire

# MAN

By **Jessica Pressler**

**Javier Bardem** is a master of playing the crazy, from a bob-topped serial killer in *No Country for Old Men* to a revenge-happy cyberterrorist in *Skyfall*. But these characters are not just complicated men; they're **complicated men with heart.** How does Bardem—who's fortunate enough to be both critically adored and married to Penélope Cruz—**find the soul inside the beast?**

Photographs by **Alexei Hay**



Jacket by **Gucci.**



Jacket and T-shirt by Dolce & Gabbana.

# JAVIER

Bardem is on his knees. "Look at my face," he explains delightedly, pointing to his iPhone, which displays a photo of him backstage at an AC/DC show. In it, he is genuflecting at the feet of the band's lead guitarist, Angus Young, his muscular arms wrapped tightly around the diminutive rocker in a way that recalls Koko and her kitten. "Look at how little is Angus," coos Bardem, who is six feet tall with the Incredible Hulk's hairdo, an Easter Island statue's head, and an enormous grin on his face. "He came into the room, and I fell to my knees," he says, getting a bit misty at the recollection. "I almost cried." He laughs. "He was probably like, 'Who the fuck *is* this guy?'"

The point is, Javier Bardem loves AC/DC. He likes to say he learned English by listening to *Back in Black*, which may account for the lyrical, occasionally Yoda-like quality of his speech. "I love hard rock, and I love heavy metal," he tells me. "It's always been something I've been drinking from, the energy of metal."

We were supposed to go see a metal band tonight, a deathcore outfit called Born of Osiris playing at the Roxy on Sunset Boulevard. But the timing didn't work out, which is why Bardem is proving his metal cred while sipping a Coke Zero in the chintz-covered, decidedly un-rocking Polo Lounge at the Beverly Hills Hotel, full of tanned industry types murmuring about the recent Best Picture fiasco at the Academy Awards. Bardem doesn't quite fit in here, literally—I had to pull out our table a foot so that he could wedge himself into the small tufted booth. Despite the fact that he is a big-time movie star married to another movie star (Penélope Cruz), counts Eddie Vedder and Bono among his closest friends (the proof is on the next page), and happens to be in Los Angeles, on the eve of his forty-eighth birthday, because he presented an award with Meryl Freaking Streep at said Oscars, Bardem still has an outsider quality.

Maybe it's because he has always lived in Spain and shows a general disregard for Hollywood convention. "Do you mind if we do not go?" he asks, declining a call from his publicist, who wants to remind him of our secondary plan, to go to a comedy show later in the evening. He gives me a searching look, his eyes heavy-lidded and long-lashed like a camel's, "Because we're not going to be able to talk." And as he points out, signaling the waiter for another drink, "we are getting very deep here."

**TO BE HONEST,** I'd been nervous about meeting Javier Bardem. Not just because he loves a band that's been compared to Cannibal Corpse and has a song called "Open Arms to Damnation," but also because "very deep" appears to be his default setting. Just look at his résumé: You never see him getting his butt waxed in gross-out comedies or hear him as the voice of an animated hedgehog. He prefers characters who are dying, or tormented, or simply scary as shit, and who he fully inhabits. Remember *Skyfall*? As written, his character could have been any old Bond villain. In Bardem's hands, he became a flame-haired sexual deviant so compelling, poor Daniel Craig looked like a walking bag of hammocks by comparison. It's impossible to forget *No Country for Old Men*'s Anton Chigurh, the bowl-cut-wearing, cattle-gun-toting, empty-eyed assassin that landed him an Oscar. His latest role, the undead Captain Salazar in *Pirates of the Caribbean,* has yet to hit screens, but Bardem has already decided he's "completely terrifying," *based on the trailer alone.* It's no wonder that the awards section of his IMDb profile is, like, twelve pages long, or that top directors fall all over themselves to pronounce him his generation's De Niro or Pacino. "He's one of the greatest of our time," quoth Julian Schnabel. "A powerhouse," per Darren Aronofsky. "The best in the world," sayeth Jerry Bruckheimer. The man has *gravitas*. He's *cool*. And I imagine he could send me screaming from the restaurant with a single "What business is it of yours, *friendo*?"

Suit's a rebel when Bardem, with shaggy hair, a slight dad bod, and a borderline goofy personality, turns out to be a much less intimidating presence than I expected. Within minutes he's talking about how awkward he felt onstage with Streep, "tripping on words, not knowing where to look, not seeing the teleprompter," and confessing his many man crushes, who, in addition to Angus Young, include Al Pacino ("I find him so physically attractive. Oh, my God, *yes*"), Brad Pitt ("I saw him once on the red carpet and I was like, *wow*"), and Johnny Depp ("What face!").

It's hard to reconcile this bubbly personality with a face associated with some of the most iconic villains of our time. Bardem's friends often say he is typecast because of his giant head, and he seems to agree. "Sometimes, when a role has some success, they want you to do it over and over," he says. But it's also clear he's drawn to sussing out what he calls the "human evil angle" of these darker characters, the idea that "behind every monster, there's a person, and we have to look at what makes that person become a monster, so that we can see ourselves being vulnerable to becoming a monster."

**"VERY DEEP" APPEARS TO BE BARDEM'S DEFAULT SETTING. HE PREFERS CHARACTERS WHO ARE DYING, OR TORMENTED, OR SIMPLY SCARY AS SHIT.**

Take Salazar. For his *Pirates* character, Bardem created a whole backstory based on the real accounts of medieval Spanish naval officers who stalked the seas. "Back in the time, the pride of these people was very strong," he explains, "and if that pride was wounded, they would *kill* for it." As a result of being so injured, Salazar literally seeps with rage. In the form of a dark liquid that drips from his incisors every time he speaks, the chocolate-flavored innards of a capsule Bardem calls "monkey poop." To come up with his body language, he says he imagined a bull.

A bull?

"Yes, this wounded bull," he says. "I was attracted to the idea of how physically painful rage is. That's something that was beautifully done in Shakespeare's *Richard III*."

There in the booth, Bardem shows me what he means, curving his back into a sclerotic arch, forming a gnarled fist, and jutting out his chin in a way that would give an orthodontist a panic. Suddenly, he's completely transformed himself. It's kind of amazing, watching a peacock bust out his fan. "His rage and his envy are *in the body*," Bardem says, holding the posture and dropping his voice to a shiver-me-timbers growl. "That's why he's deformed. Because he's *not enough*. Because he wants *everything*. Because the person that he hates the most is himself." Bardem straightens up and resumes his normal voice. "You know?"

When I suggest it might be an uncommon level of preparation to bring thirteenth-century nautical history and Shakespeare to a Disney production so laden with effects you'd think they'd CGI the acting in later, he just smiles. "But I don't know it any other way," he says.

**THE HILLS OF LOS ANGELES** are lousy with people claiming to be born performers, for Bardem, it's actually true. He comes from a long line of them. His grandparents were actors, his uncle was a filmmaker, and his mother, Pilar Bardem, is an actress who raised Bardem and his two siblings in a household where "performance was the religion," he says, a way "to understand the spirit, and teach you what a human soul is."

He landed his first role in 1974, at age five, after his mother took him along to an audition for a telenovela called *El Picaro*. The director asked him to gig-

gle as he was being menaced by bullfighters Bardem, sporting a bowl cut that uncannily foreshadowed his *No Country for Old Men* look, screamed. He made the cut, and was hooked. "After that, the phone didn't ring for a long time, but I was an actor," he says. "And once you are an actor, you're fucked. You can't escape, you cannot make your way out of it, unless you have to feed your family," he laughs. "Even then, you are an actor."

He would know. Although his mother was respected in her industry, she struggled to support her children. "My father was not present, and my mother was working her ass off all around Spain, doing theater and TV," says Bardem, who often was left at home for long periods of time with his brother and sister, who are six and five years older. "We sometimes didn't have anything to eat. We didn't have hot water. We didn't have *light* many times."

Still, none of them were able to resist the family business. Bardem's sister eventually bowed out and his brother lands small roles, but the big success that eluded them slowly came his way. Through playing rugby (which helped calm his own wounded-bull feelings, what he calls his teenage "outrage"), he developed a physique that made him a popular choice for beefcake roles on telenovelas. "You know, the Latin macho thing," he says. By the late eighties, his profile had risen enough that it may have induced some jealousy. One night in 1989, Bardem was jumped by a group of strangers at a bar who "decided to have fun with my face," he says. If the intent was to put him out of work, it didn't. The broken nose he sustained as a result merely left him looking artfully rearranged, and Bardem started racking up bigger credits: as a pimp in Bigas Luna's *Ages of Lulu* (1990) and, in what would turn out to be his breakout role, a pork-shilling playboy who romances an eighteen-year-old Penélope Cruz in *Jamón Jamón* (1992).

"He was everywhere in Spain," says Julian Schnabel, who was living there at the time and arranged a meeting with the actor. "I thought, *Either this guy is exactly who he is in the movie—the underwear model selling ham—or he's a great actor.* It turned out he was a great actor." At the time, Bardem's grasp of English didn't extend far beyond the lyrics to "Highway to Hell," but Schnabel saw enough potential that he offered him a part in *Before Night Falls*, based on the memoirs of gay Cuban poet Reinaldo Arenas. When the lead, Benicio Del Toro, dropped out, Schnabel asked Bardem to take over.

For his first major role outside Spain, Bardem prepared obsessively. He transformed physically, dyeing his hair and losing twenty-four pounds to better resemble the poet, who committed suicide while dying of AIDS in 1990. He read all of Arenas's work, traveled to Cuba so that he could meet his friends and master his accent; and then moved into New York's Chelsea Hotel, where he spent three months learning English and writing Arenas a series of letters, each of which began, "Help me."

The process was "excruciating," according to Schnabel, who says he worried that Bardem was endangering himself psychologically. "I mean, he *becomes* these people."

Bardem's performance, nominated for an Oscar, was hailed by everyone from critics to the departed poet's friends, one of whom went so far as to say he felt betrayed when the actor turned back into himself after the shoot ended.

The only one who wasn't impressed was Bardem. "When I first saw the movie, I almost killed myself," he told the *Guardian* in 2001. "Sometimes I say to myself, 'What are you doing in this absurd job? Why don't you go to Africa and help people?' But the only thing I can do is act."

**ONE THING WAS CERTAIN.** If he was going to keep acting, Bardem was done with the Latin macho thing. He'd developed a taste for something more—"he delves into characters very deeply," as the Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar put it at the time, and seeks the kinds of parts "where the preparation takes almost as long as the shooting."

Bardem describes his choice of roles as such. "Meryl Streep once said—and if she didn't say it, I read that she said it and I loved it, so I feel she said it—'A career is based on the times you say *no* rather than the times you say *yes*.'"

Things Bardem said no to included *Minority Report*, *The World Is Not Enough*, and *Blow*, which starred his future wife, as well as a slew of parts other actors would have gladly had their noses broken to play. Things he said *yes* to were smaller movies with complicated characters: an obsessive detective in *The Dancer Upstairs*, a quadriplegic fighting to end his life in *The Sea Inside*, and, of course, *No Country for Old Men*.

When Bardem landed the role of Chigurh, who tracks his prey across the desert from behind the wheel of an old Ramcharger, he didn't know how to drive and had never held a gun. "They called me 'the Spanish Ballerina' on set because they would be like, 'Cut!' and I'd be like, 'Eek!'" he shrieks. "'Get that thing away from me!'"

He jokes about it now, but playing "a machine totally numb to other people's feelings and even his own" was rough on Bardem, who prides himself on being "emotionally driven."

"He got really depressed during that movie," says his costar and friend Josh Brolin. "He was, like, battling himself." Bardem had to suppress his accent. As a foreigner marooned in New Mexico and southwest Texas during the three-month shoot, he was lonely. "He was a miserable single guy," says Brolin. "And he had a bad haircut on top of it. So things really weren't looking up for him."

Brolin is kidding—obviously things worked out just fine. After winning the Academy Award, becoming the first Spanish actor to do so, Bardem celebrated by performing rock anthems at an after party. "He was holding up a bottle into which he was singing along with every song," recalls Brolin. "It was better than watching him win the Oscar, watching him let loose and have a good time."

**AFTER THAT, BARDEM GOT IN** the habit of alternating dark roles with lighter ones. Which is how he reconnected with Cruz in 2008, on the set of the Woody Allen rom-com *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*. It had been ten years since they'd worked together, in Almodóvar's *Live Flesh* (which also memorably featured Bardem's mother, Pilar, biting off Cruz's umbilical cord after she gives birth on a bus). Cruz had since moved to Los Angeles and become a star in the U.S., working alongside global brands such as Tom Cruise and Will Smith. "She had a life here, which I always found very courageous," Bardem says. "She left her kingdom and took the hard way." In Allen's film, they played a complex couple madly in love with each other (and Scarlett Johansson). "And then," he says with a mischievous smile, "it happened."

Javelope—I just made that up, no one calls them that—didn't admit they were together until two years later, in 2010, when they got married during a break in Cruz's installment of *Pirates of the Caribbean* (the fourth, *On*

## Bono ❤ Bardem

*The rock god tells Esquire what he loves most about "the J-Man"*

"I've been a fan of Javier's since *Jamón Jamón*. I became his friend in the '00s. He'd come to U2 shows, scare our audience with his air guitar, then steal the hearts of our womenfolk. Penélope is a friend—of course I had to make sure this man I so admired onscreen was up to scratch to date the Bad Panny, as she's known in Ireland. He came through that drink off with flying colors, and at the end of the night I asked him to marry me.

"Such a macho guy needs a feminine side to be such a great actor—in touch with his feelings and all that. If you don't believe me, check out the J-Man in a feather boa at U2's 2015 show in Barcelona.

"There is a serious side to this man. He despises injustice and became a (RED) campaign warrior not just because we were paying for drugs for people who couldn't afford them but because such inequality angered him. In that sense he has very Spanish values—I think he was brought up to be annoyed at such things. He's built for combat."



Jacket and T-shirt by **Dolce & Gabbana**; jeans by **Gucci**; shoes by **O'Keeffe**.



Jacket and T-shirt by Dolce & Gabbana

*Stranger Tides*). But ten years and two kids later, the cat is kinda out of the bag. "What we have is the most important thing: a past," he says. "We knew each other back at the very beginning of it all, and that is important because when we saw each other again, I saw *her* and she saw *me*."

Cruz won the Oscar next, for *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*, and Bardem was nominated again two years later for *Biutiful*, after which he did *Eat Pray Love*, followed by Terrence Malick's bleak *To the Wonder*, one of his most intense acting experiences yet. Malick movies are notoriously destabilizing for actors; as Bardem puts it, "you don't know shit" about what the elusive director is planning. This one got especially weird: Bardem, playing a priest of slowly eroding faith, was dispatched along with photographer Eugene Richards to a meth-scarred town near where they were filming in rural Oklahoma and told to interact, in character, with the locals.

It's indicative of the power of celebrity that despite being aware that Bardem wasn't an actual priest—several ID'd him as "Penelope Cruz's husband"—people confessed to him anyway. "We heard about horrible drug problems, medical problems, sexual abuse," Richards tells me. "We met a Klansman who told us about his life of terrible crimes he'd done to black people." Bardem would sit there and listen, trying, and often failing, to maintain a priestlike calm. "His knee would be going crazy," Richards says. Eventually, he got so overwhelmed that he needed to take time off from the production. "We gave you the world's greatest actor," Richards recalls an assistant director scolding him, "and you gave us back a destroyed man."

Destroyed is perhaps in the eye of the beholder. "That was an *experience*," Bardem tells me with relish back in the Polo Lounge. "It's one of the reasons why I'm an actor," he goes on. "Because it takes me out of what you call 'the comfort place.'" He and Richards accomplished the extraordinary feat of persuading Malick to give them the rights to the footage, which they plan to release this year as a documentary. According to the photographer, Bardem also donated a substantial amount of money to the people who appeared in the film, including setting up a trust for a child whose mother was suffering from cancer. Richards says that Bardem asked him to travel to Oklahoma to hand out the checks to their "new friends" in person. "Which was awkward," Richards admits. "But it was kind of endearing."

These days, Bardem isn't affected quite so deeply by his acting "experiences," and is unlikely to talk about killing himself over a performance. "I don't hurt myself anymore," he says. Now he works with an acting coach during the preparation phase—"Which I love," he says, "because it's such a lonely process"—and has two therapists, one he speaks to in English and one he speaks to in Spanish. "Everybody should do therapy," he says. "We are full of things we cannot answer for ourselves. Some of them will be answered, some [illegible] the health is in asking questions."

He is especially handy now that he is the father of two children, ages six and three. "Do you have kids?" Bardem asks me, looking thrilled when I say I do. "Before becoming a parent, you never experience that kind of love, which is called 'unconditional love.' It's terrifying!" he says. "I mean, they have our balls grabbed."

Growing up, Bardem says, he held on to a lot of anger about his own father. "But now at forty-eight, being a man, I understand one does what he can," he says. For his part, Bardem is extremely involved, telling me that he and Cruz love nothing more than spending hours pretending to be princesses and dragons. "Being away more than two weeks almost breaks my heart," he says. "My body starts to feel physical symptoms."

This makes it more difficult to do things like spend two months in a Brooklyn warehouse rehearsing for Darren Aronofsky's *mother!*, which is what Bardem did this past winter. Like all of Aronofsky's films, this one is shrouded in secrecy. The only information that's been released is that it's about a couple "whose relationship is tested when unlavited guests descend on their home," although Bardem lets slip that he and Jennifer Lawrence play the couple. "But it's more complicated than that!" he protests. "Shit, I'm busted."

He is pairing up with a longtime collaborator in two other upcoming projects: his wife. The first is *Escobar*, which finished filming in December. It's a project he's been plotting since the early 2000s. Given Hollywood's love affair with drug cartels, one could be forgiven for thinking Bardem had *already* played Pablo Escobar; in fact, he'd been offered the part numerous times, but he always said *no*, feeling the scripts didn't measure up to the complexity of the character he envisioned. "I said if I do Escobar, I will do the Escobar that I have in mind: the one from the human-evil angle, the one that conveys the man that didn't have anything, the ambition, the Machiavellian mind," he says. Finally, he decided to produce it himself.

He modeled his performance, naturally, on the hippopotamus. Apparently Escobar kept them as pets. "As you know, the hippopotamus is a very emotionally detached animal," Bardem says. "He is the most wild and criminal of all the animals. More than lions, more than tigers." He draws his eyebrows together and flares his nostrils in a hippopotamian way, which—holy moly, he's right—looks remarkably like every picture I've seen of Escobar. "You know, in the pond," he says, shifting his eyes from side to side. "Moving the shit with his tail. Looking at you with those little legs and that big, big belly. And then! When they feel threatened, they move fucking fast. They will run over you in seconds, and they will tear you apart. *That's* Escobar. He never, ever gave up, ever. You can't stop a hippopotamus."

(Disclaimer: I have no idea if these hippopotamus facts are true, but to paraphrase Javier Bardem, He said them and I love them, so I *feel* them to be true.)

In the film, Cruz plays Escobar's longtime mistress, journalist Virginia Vallejo. "I knew since the beginning, since I dreamed it, that Penélope was going to be perfect for the lover, and we were not even together!" he beams. "And of course she could not refuse."

This summer, he and Cruz will film an as-yet-untitled project in Spain with Asghar Farhadi, the Iranian director whose film *The Salesman* won this year's Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film but who opted to boycott the awards, instead sending an Iranian-American astronaut to read a letter in protest of Donald Trump's Muslim ban. For Bardem, who actually did end up going to Africa and made a documentary in 2012 about Western Saharan refugees, *Sons of the Clouds*, Farhadi's speech was a highlight. Particularly the line about the power movies have to create empathy.

"People say, 'Stick to your business. You're an *actor*,'" Bardem says. "Excuse me! One part of what we do is bring light to darkness. And let me tell you, it's not nice. Sometimes you're saying and doing things that you regret, that you feel disgusted by. But you are doing it because you want to put focus on what happened that made him become who he became, how it's possible that somebody feels so much less empathy for others. And when a performance really hits its goal, it can touch us deeply, to a place where we have to confront ourselves. *Could I be like that person? Why do I feel so sorrow for that person?* That's art. That's what art is supposed to do."

**WHEN I SUGGEST HE PUTS IN AN UNCOMMON LEVEL OF PREPARATION FOR HIS ROLES, BARDEM JUST SMILES. "I OON'T KNOW IT ANY OTHER WAY," HE SAYS.**

There's a pause as we both remember that we are here, in the Polo Lounge at the Beverly Hills Hotel, to talk about a Disney movie about undead pirates. But Bardem goes on, because, after all, *he doesn't know any other way*. "Of course, not every performance is artistic," he says. "But that's what we strive for. You find a way to better understand how, why that person became that thing. It's about how to be sensitive to the misery that we have around. We cannot be blind to that. No matter how high the walls are." ■

# That FIRST WARM DAY

We **look forward** to it every year. **A date that is not set** but just seems to appear. That day winter comes to an end and **skin** (did you see her?) **returns.**

*By Stephanie Mannatt Danler*



*Photograph by Atisha Paulson*

We were kids from southern California, still adjusting to the corporeal intensity of having a season change, how it worked on you from the inside out. I was twenty-three. My best friend and I were ripe with our accomplishments: We had held down jobs (hers as an assistant publicist, mine as an assistant server), we had had sex we found meaningful (with boys who were mostly kind), and we had survived the winter. Winter had been dark—physically and mentally. People in New York City sure drank a lot. The concrete and steel sure amplified the cruelty of the cold. We were paler, more washed-out, than we had ever been in our lives.

Then came April and the buds on tree branches took on an immature phosphorescence. One day they exploded, pom-poms of blossoms. That spring I had a black shift dress that was mercilessly short, but because of its boxiness I called it "sophisticated." I put it on to read in Union Square for an hour before work. Black dress, black sunglasses, bare, untoned legs. The greens leaked onto the tables at the farmers' market with the first foraged lettuces in baskets. Women walked in thin, ethereal fabrics, walked without seeming to touch the ground. Thighs and breasts exhilarated by the air. We all watched them, they watched me, every gaze refined by lust. *I've made it,* I thought.

I hadn't even been in the city a year.

Spring gets abused by writers, poets, artists, but that doesn't mean that it ever stops being spring. Regardless of how we saddle it with metaphor or run it ragged with stories of rebirth, renewal, hope, it remains an unalloyed fact. The days will lengthen. The ground will thaw. The sun will come. The trees will bud, flowers flush, and you will be released from that persistent fear that you might not make it.

Years into my life in New York City, I became enchanted by a lilac bush on my street in Williamsburg, where Grand Street dipped toward the water. "Your favorite," he would say when it flowered. "Your favorite," he would say when he bought the plastic-wrapped branches for me. We lined up for the first asparagus at the Greenmarket. New vintages of rosés arrived and we unpacked them gently. We pickled ramps and jammed strawberries and stared out the window while the trees grew into the view. The years passed like that. Lilacs, ramps, rose, blankets in the park.

In winter, from that apartment, we could see the East River, the bridge. A winter came when we packed our life into separate boxes. I kept looking out the window. When the movers came, I wept. The men ignored it, yelling to one another in Russian. Losing that view, that person, the marriage, those springs, felt like losing everything.

It had been a month since moving day and I was living on a black leather couch in a friend's office. There was no view. There was a space heater that couldn't cure me. The innards of my suitcases blanketed the floor. No matter how I bedded the couch, I woke up with my face stuck to the leather.

I got sick and stayed sick. Snot froze on my face. The ends of my hair froze and sometimes broke off. I saw the way people on the subway still moved with purpose. I watched myself performing conversations at work. But I wasn't there. I was underwater, voices reaching me as muffled echoes, all light diffused, barely able to penetrate. It was during this time, in early May, I found myself walking toward Grand Street.

It shouldn't be surprising that the lilacs were there on my old street. The surprise was that we weren't. As I stood under the clumsy, lavender blossoms inhaling, I started to sweat. The sun was out and the air was tempered, barely humid. I forgot about spring.

That spring it was a blue hooded sweatshirt with frayed cuffs. A beanie I had taken to wearing so that I didn't have to wash my hair. Bleak. I sat by the river and watched people. Women's shoulders, pinking from sudden heat. Children stripping themselves of jackets, then their shoes. Bodies that had been so tightly wound against the cold, now unwinding on grass. Necks lengthening, cracking, as faces tilted toward the sun, thawing, warming.

I took off my hat, shut my eyes, paralleled my face to the sky. A small shock when a breeze from the river lifted my hair off my neck. It was the first time I thought it was possible that someone would touch me again. That someone might see my bare legs, or see me. That I might break back to the surface of life and breathe. Yes, I had forgotten about spring. The revelation was that it hadn't forgotten about me. ■

# CHARGE OF THE RIGHT BRIGADE

By Sam TANENHAUS

*If you're wondering* **how DONALD TRUMP happened,** *all you have to do is* **let PAT BUCHANAN,** *the founding father of Republican insurrection,* **beguile you with a HISTORY no one else can tell**

Photographs by Jeremy LIEBMAN




*Buchanan at his home in McLean, Virginia, with a replica of Robert E. Lee's pistol.*

# IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY

exactly when the rehabilitation of Patrick Buchanan began, partly because his banishment from polite company was never total. MSNBC rather publicly fired him in 2012—over the protests of Joe Scarborough and Mika Brzezinski—after the publication of *Suicide of a Superpower*, the latest, though by no means the shrillest, in the series of duck-and-cover, they're-coming-for-us screeds he's been writing since 1998. With chapter titles like "The Death of Christian America," "The End of White America," and "The White Party," it sounded the alarm of demographic apocalypse, offering pungent observations such as: "U.S.-born Hispanics are far more likely to smoke, drink, abuse drugs, and become obese than foreign-born Hispanics."

And yet two years later, there he was again on *Morning Joe*, serenaded with the *Welcome Back, Kotter* theme song. On camera, Buchanan plugged his new book, *The Greatest Comeback*, which tells how he helped Nixon get elected president, a three-year siege that raised a repeat loser from the dead. Buchanan is a vivid storyteller, and his account draws amply on his personal archive of briefing papers, letters, and notes. The book also illuminates the Nixon years' atmosphere of cultural embattlement, a political mood that looks more relevant than ever in the Age of Donald Trump.

So do Buchanan's three long shot attempts, in 1992, 1996, and 2000, to become president himself. He never came close to winning, but each time he nagged at something, rubbed a nerve in just enough voters of a particular kind—what he called "peasants" and we call the white working class—to send ripples of panic through the Republican party. The echoes of Buchananism in Trump's campaign were a pet theme during the election and its aftermath. But if anything, the debt has been understated. Put most simply, Buchanan begat Trumpism as his former ally William F. Buckley Jr. begat Reaganism. The also-ran of the Republican hard Right is the intellectual godfather of our current revolution.

It's true that Trump found his own way, as early as 1987, to the America First platform he ran on almost thirty years later. But it was Buchanan who sounded, or brayed, the message we all now know by heart: anti-immigrant, anti-Europe, anti-Asia, and free-trade, anti more or less anything that inches America away from the splendors of the 1950s.

**IT IS A CURIOUS FACT** of Buchanan's political history that his crusades are remembered as other men's defeats—George H. W. Bush's in 1992 and Bob Dole's in 1996. Both secured the Republican nomination, but only after Buchanan beat them up and exposed them as out-of-touch frontmen for the GOP elite. In '92, amid a slumping economy, Buchanan railed against Japan's "predatory trade policies" and an agreement with Mexico later called NAFTA. The United States, he suggested, should think about quitting the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. These heresies got him 37.5 percent of the vote in New Hampshire against the glass-jawed incumbent Bush. Four years later, declaring himself the tribune of "a conservativism that gives voice to the voiceless," Buchanan won the state outright, beating Dole by a percentage point. Dole recovered in later primaries, but, like Bush, he staggered on rubbery legs to the finish line, where Bill Clinton was waiting.

Trump also belongs to the company of the Buchanan-scarred. The confrontation happened in 2000, when Buchanan, having become a pariah within the GOP, made a quixotic last stand on the Reform party ticket. Trump, even more quixotically, sought the Reform nomination, too, swaggering in with a book to promote and hot-air talk of the $100 million he would spend to get on the ticket and then to win "the whole megillah." Before Buchanan smacked him down, Trump got in some preemptive sore-loser licks. "Look, he's a Hitler lover," he said. "I guess he's an anti-Semite. He doesn't like the blacks, he doesn't like the gays." For once affecting a statesman's high detachment, Buchanan said only that the Reform party and the presidency weren't for sale.

He remembers it all today, as he remembers much else in his half century of national politics, as a quasi joke. "Somebody said, 'Pat, he called you a Nazi, a Hitlerite.' I said, 'With Trump, you have to realize, these are terms of endearment.'" Sitting in the living room of his big Georgian house in McLean, Virginia, just after the inauguration, Buchanan lets out a soft roar, his eyes disappearing into his still-meaty face. He turned seventy-eight in November, and the thousands of hours on the road, the layers of TV pancake, have wrinkled his pug features, while his hair has faded toward apricot and is thinning in back. But his laughter is alive and happy. And why not? He did in 2000 what sixteen Republicans couldn't do in 2016, despite the best efforts of William Kristol, the half-hearted pushback of the Koch brothers, and the whole machinery of "Conservatism, Inc." Not only that: The platform from which Buchanan once exuberantly ranted is now GOP doctrine and is fast becoming the law—or the multiplying illegalities—of the land.

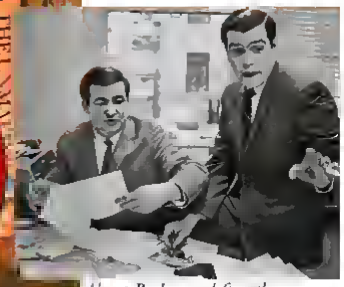
Buchanan grew up in a giant family in northwest Washington, D.C., one of nine kids. He and three brothers, born in successive years, formed a posse of brawlers and street fighters, "the scourge of Washington's Catholic community," according to Maureen Dowd, who grew up hearing tales of "the latest Buchanan hooliganism." Buchanan has written about it, too, with undisguised nostalgia, in his autobiography, *Right from the Beginning*. He is not a man for second thoughts, whether about the sucker punches he threw and absorbed or the cold-war religion he learned in parochial schools and at home. His father was a prosperous accountant who burned incense to the homegrown anti-communist martyrs Joe McCarthy and General Douglas MacArthur, and to the distant savior Generalissimo Franco. In *Right from the Beginning*, Buchanan fondly recalls how he and his schoolmates at Blessed Sacrament flung snowballs at the "Boston Blackie," a bus that carried black cleaning women out to the leafy white suburbs, in 1950. Almost seventy years later, the man who disparaged Barack Obama's celebrated speech about the Reverend Jeremiah Wright and the politics of race as "the same old con, the same old shakedown" may be no one's ideal of a prophet or wise man, but he has quite possibly become, to quote David Brooks, "the most influential public intellectual in America today."

Give Buchanan points for consistency, at least, and for self-effacement, conditioned by years as a backroom White House adjutant. "I heard from Trump during the primaries," he says. "He called about columns of mine that he liked. But I did not hear from him in the fall election. And I've not talked to him since. I was delighted when he got in."



Above: Buchanan with Nixon on a plane during the 1968 presidential campaign.



Above: Buchanan (left), with Nixon aide Dwight Chapin at the president's campaign headquarters in 1968. Below: Buchanan on the campaign trail during the 1996 primaries.





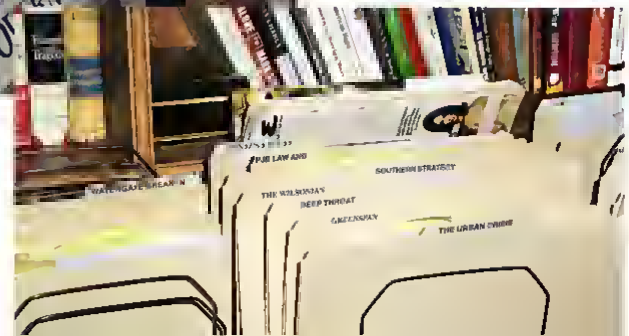



Above: Buchanan with Ronald Reagan in 1986. Right: Buchanan's files at his house in McLean.

*For decades, Buchanan has sounded, or brayed, the message we all now know by heart:*

**ANTI-IMMIGRANT, ANTI-EUROPE, ANTI-FREE-TRADE, ANTI MORE OR LESS ANYTHING**

*that inches America away from the splendors of the 1950s.*



In fact, Buchanan has been plugging Trump for months in the column he writes on Mondays and Thursdays for his website. Trump has his share of defenders—including a handful of intellectuals—but it's safe to say that only Buchanan would defend the president's directive about transgender access to bathrooms by citing *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical.

**"HOW CAN SUCH A FANATIC** be so likable?" Garry Wills, a Buchanan watcher since the 1968 campaign, has wondered. Wills, no pushover, isn't alone. Michael Kinsley has Buchananitis. George Packer has it, too. "Pat Buchanan is a nativist, an isolationist, and an armed to the teeth culture warrior," he wrote in 2008, after interviewing Buchanan in McLean. "He's also a very nice man and a wonderful raconteur."

There is no deep mystery to Buchanan's talent for disarming writers. He's one of them—a lover of good prose and poetry, an observer with peeled eyes and keen ears, a pack rat archivist of his own career whose voice and mind hum with bold ideas and clever arguments. And he's one of the premier phrasemakers in modern American politics. Connoisseurs have their favorite campaign lines. Mine both come from 1996. The first was his mockery of Dole and the GOP regulars as "the bland leading the bland", the second came after Buchanan got trounced in eight primaries on a single Tuesday and shouted, with a cackle, "We are going to fight until hell freezes over, and then we're going to fight on the ice."

The other thing writers like, and envy, is where Buchanan's verbal gifts have taken him: into the thick of the political scrum. He has stumped through dozens of primaries, captivated a national political convention (in Houston, in 1992), and spent hours giving advice to great men who actually read what he wrote and listened to what he said.

Buchanan met his wife, Shelley, when they worked together on Nixon's staff. Their pillared white house in McLean, next door to the CIA compound, is a homey museum of Buchanan's career, with artifacts on open display: vintage replicas of pistols owned by his military heroes; a glass-fronted case with a pitchfork, souvenir of the 1996 campaign; and, in an alcove, photographs of Buchanan buddling in the White House with the three presidents he served—Nixon, Ford, and Reagan.

It was in this living room that right-wing zealots gathered to January 1987 to anoint Buchanan their new leader, God's bonest their to Goldwater and Reagan. "Let the blood bath begin!" one of them shouted. Buchanan loves the sanguine talk, but his own idiom is quite often refined, even bookish. Only a man besotted with words, who has a feel for historical irony, could begin his testimony before the Senate Watergate Committee by saying, "You're looking at the Buckminster Fuller of dirty tricks." It was a bravura performance, and left Nixon giddy with the belief that Buchanan had dealt a "death blow" to the committee. He hadn't, of course. But his quick jab sparring with inquisitors like Senator Sam Ervin made Buchanan a star, and gave even the Nixon haters a villain they could enjoy, if not root for.

*Not exactly anyone's ideal of a prophet or wise man, Buchanan has nonetheless quite possibly become, to quote David Brooks,* **"THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL IN AMERICA TODAY."**

**BUCHANAN REVISITS MUCH OF** this history in his new book, *Nixon's White House Wars*, his thirteenth and perhaps best timed. The wars he describes, in opulent detail, were waged against the media, much like the one we're seeing now. Barely thirty, Buchanan was Nixon's Stephen Bannon, the in-house ideologue and commando-in-chief who goaded Nixon into taking on "big media"—especially the TV networks, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*—and then wrote the scripts for the attacks.

Buchanan likes journalists as much as they like him. He used to be one, and was good at it. A scholarship student at the Columbia School of Journalism, he was tutored by moonlighting *Times* editors and then got on the fast track at the *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, a bastion of Midwest conservatism. His long postmortem on the trouncing of his early hero, Barry Goldwater, in the 1964 election was tough-minded and just. "The senator was vague, his analyses too simple, his proposals shallow," Buchanan wrote, at age twenty-five. But, he added, the revolution was just beginning, and was bigger than the man who had led it. "The new conservatism antedated Goldwater, made him a national figure to rival Presidents, and will post-date him," Buchanan predicted. "There is no sign the conservative movement will wither and die. It has lost the battle, not the war."

Fourteen months later, Buchanan quit the *Globe Democrat* and joined Nixon's staff, with a big salary hike, from $9,000 to $13,500 (a little more than $100,000 today). The two had a history going back to the fifties, when Nixon was the vice president and Buchanan was earning pocket money at the Burning Tree golf club. Assigned once to caddie for Nixon, Buchanan followed him into the bushes and unzipped next to him, against club rules. If Nixon minded, he didn't say so.

Joining Nixon's staff, in 1965, Buchanan knew exactly what his job was: to mend fences with the hardcore Right, including the ideologues at *National Review*. For them, Nixon had been the errand boy of Dwight Eisenhower, the moderate they despised for governing from the center and declining to roll back the New Deal.

Out in the country it looked different. Eisenhower was the hero of World War II who then got us out of Korea and kept us out of Armageddon with the Soviets. Nixon was his junior partner, the respectful non com who had waited his turn.

Buchanan thrilled to something else—Nixon the hard-edged political fighter and GOP loyalist. Together they toured the country in advance of the crucial 1966 midterms, tirelessly helping candidates for the House and Senate, building up goodwill. Those surprised at Buchanan's own adroit presidential campaigns, done on a shoestring, forgot his apprenticeship with Nixon, the pioneer technician of modern retail politics.

Nixon won in 1968, but just barely. He got only 43 percent of the vote and failed to carry either the House or the Senate, no thanks to George Wallace, the Alabama firebreather, who won 13 percent and five states in the Electoral College—all defecting Democrats, but now Republicans in the making, if the party would fine-tune its message. The country was splitting at the seams over Vietnam and civil rights. The game, or war, was about "the sixties": the protests, the culture clash, the polarization.

**IN 1968 THE POLITICAL EXPERTS** were all looking in the wrong place, just as they would do in 2016. "The young, the anti-war groups, the mass demonstrations," Buchanan remembers. But Nixon's men picked up a different signal. The center was being ignored and was there for the grabbing. "You could carve off the conservative wing of the Democratic party, populist and conservative—Northern Catholics and Southern Protestants we called them then—and bring them into the (continued on page 120)




*Buchanan ran for president in 1992 on a familiar platform. "America First—and Second, and Third."*

# THE BOMBER SQUAD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
Victor DEMARCHELIER

STYLING BY
Nick SULLIVAN

This page: Jacket ($1,490) by Louis Vuitton; shirt ($140) by AMI; jeans ($430) by Balmain; necklace ($7,400) by Cartier; vintage turtleneck, jeans, Vintage Rolex Submariner watch, and rings. Therapist only: Opposite: Jacket ($535) by Varsity Leathers; shirt ($110) by [illegible]; sunglasses ($150) by Persol.

Spring is in full swing, which means YOU NEED A BOMBER JACKET. The perfect guard against random acts of weather, it's LESS STUFFY than a blazer but just as POLISHED. And with jackets in nylon, canvas, and leather (guess Justin Theroux's favorite), THERE'S NO WRONG WAY TO WEAR IT.




Jacket ($1,850) by Bottega Veneta; jeans ($750) by Saint Laurent; T-shirt, Theroux's own; necklace ($7,480) by Cartier.



# EASY RIDER

"You can't walk down Rodeo Drive without laughing at some crazy thing," says Justin Theroux, pursing where he finds inspiration for his screenplays. "It's just whether you choose to find it funny or not."

He need look no further than ten feet to find a bounty of blue-chip source material. We are sitting outside at the Hotel Bel Air, which once hosted the likes of Dean Martin; now gaggles of septuagenarians shuffle about its stone pathways like monks. It's also five minutes via motorcycle from the $22 million home Theroux, forty-five shares with his wife, Jennifer Aniston. Which is how he arrives, the engine's rumble shaking the hotel's posh stucco. Clad in skinny jeans, a blank Gucci graphic tee, and dusty boots, with a half helmet in hand, he looks like Johnny Ramone stumbling onto the set of *The Golden Girls*.

On the page, humor is Theroux's specialty—he and Ben Stiller cowrote *Tropic Thunder* and *Zoolander 2*. That partly explains why he hasn't written for *The Leftovers*, the HBO series based on Tom Perrotta's novel of the same name, which he's starred on for the past three years. "I couldn't write one of these scripts," Theroux says. "I would go right for the fart joke."

He plays Kevin Garvey, a possibly unhinged small-town police chief trying to keep the peace after 2 percent of the world's population inexplicably disappears. The show's themes—grief, fear, survival, existential dread—are well suited to Theroux's skills as a dramatic actor. "The character has a lot of internal anger and spiritual confusion mixed with incredible confidence and a romantic soul," says series cocreator Damon Lindelof—or why he thinks Theroux was perfect for the part. "It felt like all of these things were already inside Justin."

With each successive episode, the series has gained critical momentum and a rabid fan base. And given its parallels to the real world, its final season arrives as one of television's timeliest releases. "That unease people are feeling on both sides of the political aisle makes our show make a lot more sense," Theroux says. "We had that same low bass line: 'Shit, something's about to go wrong.'"

On the day of the U.S. presidential election, the actor was in Berlin to film *Mute*, the latest movie by rising auteur Duncan Jones (who's also David Bowie's son). Out this fall, it's a futuristic sci-fi noir costarring Alexander Skarsgård and Paul Rudd. Theroux remembers being struck by how the German film crew reacted that day: "They told me, 'This doesn't feel like 1944...but it does ring bells of 1933.'"

He admits that he doesn't think much about the future ("It causes me major stress"), an approach that's worked well for two decades and running. He moved to New York in 1993, eventually finding his way to the stage and then to the screen. His first role was in 1996's *I Shot Andy Warhol*; he later appeared in *American Psycho* and the movie versions of *Strangers with Candy* and *Miami Vice*. His turn as a sleazy director in David Lynch's *Mulholland Dr.* received particularly high praise. "I've been lucky," he says. "I've tripped upstairs into a lot of things."

Writing didn't come as naturally, despite his pedigree. His mother, Phyllis (columnist) and uncles Paul (novelist and travel writer), Alexander (novelist) and Peter (renowned Arabic translator) all have serious writing chops. Growing up in Washington, D.C., Theroux struggled with ADHD. "It made school harder. You become sort of a loser because you can't excel," he says. "But [ADHD] gave me other tools, because I would listen instead of read. I was able to hear the musicality of conversations. That's helped me write dialogue."

And he surrounds himself with the right people—he's close to Rudd, Will Arnett, and Amy Sedaris. "I have very funny friends and a very funny wife," Theroux says. "I bounce ideas off of them. If I get a deep belly laugh, I know I've hit something."

That very funny wife of his has transformed his life, mostly but not entirely for the better. Twenty years ago, he would've found nothing but comedy gold in the faces who graced the cover of *People*, now he is that person. "A friend once told me, 'Another you has been born, this insane person who's constantly breaking up, getting back together, having a baby, losing a baby...'"

So it's no surprise that he's wary of revealing much about his marriage. He says he and Aniston have discussed collaborating ("We were talking about an idea I had that we might start to develop together") but details are not really forthcoming. Nor does he care to share the highs and lows of their domesticity. "I'm not giving any marriage tips. I am no brighter than any man."

But he is happy to praise his better half. When asked if he's intimidated by a partner who's had such success, he says, "Not at all. She's successful for a reason—we're not in competition." Pause. "If I was competing for the same job as her, I might be less forgiving." —*Eric Sullivan*



Jacket ($2,350), T-shirt ($290), and jeans ($850) by Dior Homme; necklace ($7,480) by Cartier; bracelet ($280) by Hermès.




**"I'm not giving marriage tips," says Theroux, speaking about his wife, Jennifer Aniston. "I AM NO BRIGHTER THAN ANY MAN."**

Jacket ($6 950) and belt ($390) by **Gucci**, T-shirt by **Supreme**, jeans ($176) by **Levi's Made & Crafted**, necklace ($7 450) by **Cartier**



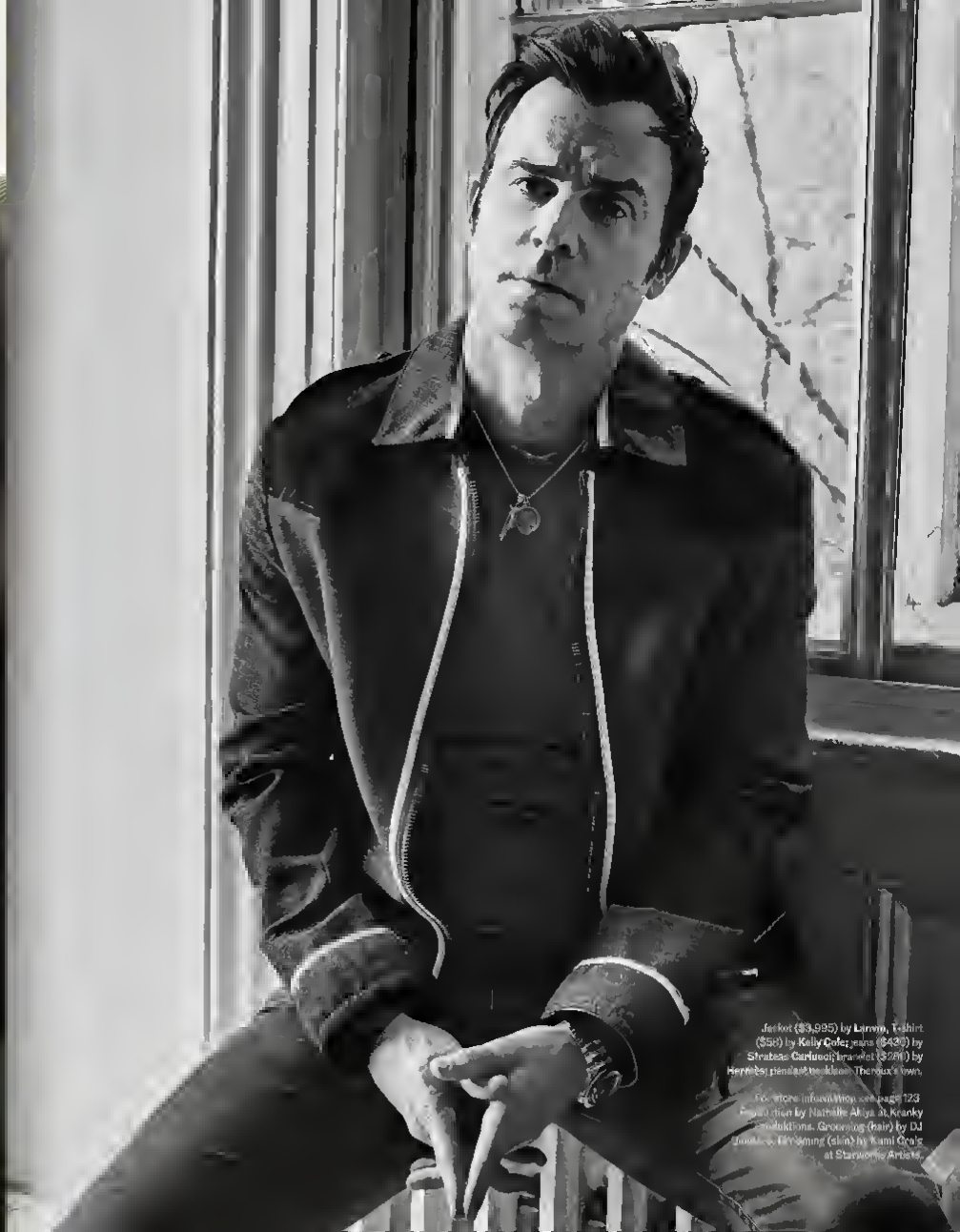
Jacket ($2 495) and T-shirt ($395) by **Valentino**; jeans ($430) by **Saint Laurent**; **Carlucci** necklace ($7 450) by **Cartier**; bracelet ($280) by **Hermès**.



**Twenty years ago, Theroux would've found NOTHING BUT COMEOY GOLO in the faces who graced the cover of *People*; NOW HE *IS* THAT PERSON.**

Jacket ($2,490) by **Dries Van Noten**; hoodie ($1,522) and jeans ($1,543) by **Balmain.**





Jacket ($3,995) by **Lanvin**, T-shirt ($58) by **Kelly Cole**; jeans ($420) by **Stratas Carluccio**; bracelet ($281) by **Hermès**; pendant necklace, Theroux's own.

For more information, see page 123.

Production by Nathalie Akya at Kranky Productions. Grooming (hair) by DJ Jacobs. Grooming (skin) by Kami Craig at Starworks Artists.

# DEALING



The power of a winning hand, the comfort of good friends
Steve McQueen (center) beats Robert Vaughn (left) and Yul Brynner (right)
on the set of *The Magnificent Seven* in 1960

**He had no friends.** His marriage was on the rocks. He was in a **full-blown** midlife crisis and started becoming the **type of man he loathed.** But then **A. O. SCOTT** joined a poker game, and everything changed.



# I'M NOT HERE TO TALK ABOUT MY MARRIAGE.

Though not wanting to talk about my marriage is part of the reason we were in couples therapy in the first place. Let's just say I had drifted, in my early forties, from a midlife malaise—the graying temples, the softening gut, the wandering eye—into a full-blown marital crisis. There are two sides to every story, and my side is that it was all my fault.

In early 2009, my wife—whom I desperately wanted not to lose—and I started spending Friday afternoons sitting on a sectional sofa in a Manhattan apartment belonging to a woman I'll call Jocelyn. In her company, we cataloged the symptoms and tried to excavate the causes. "You know," Jocelyn said to me during one session, "maybe you need some new friends." Appropriate friends. Men. My own age.

*What is she talking about?* I thought. *I have plenty of friends!* Colleagues I sometimes had lunch with. College buddies I saw when they were in town. The network of simpatico couples with children the same ages as ours who constituted our main social circle. If it was true that I lacked a pack—a collective entity I could call "the guys"—wasn't that a sign of my enlightened rejection of the savage rituals of male bonding? I'd done my time—in grade school, riding bikes to the 7 Eleven to peek at *Playboys*; in college, debating French movies over bad red wine and Camel straights in filthy dorm rooms—and evolved beyond it.

Even if Jocelyn was right, it was hard to see how to put her advice into practice. At the time—and still, as far as I know—there was no such thing as platonic, homosocial Tinder. There was also the daily, difficult work of marital repair, which demanded my full attention. Things began to get better. Though the acute crisis eventually passed, I settled into my old malaise, a state of remission well short of a cure.

♥ **"Hey, do you play poker?"** Jeff asked me one bright Sunday morning in the dugout of a Brooklyn softball field, about two years after the therapy session. I'd known him for a while; our daughters were on the same team, and over a half dozen springs we had become friendly acquaintances, which was as close as I got to friendship in those days.

Against my habits and instincts, I said yes. Which wasn't a lie, exactly—I had played a couple times in college without great distinction or enthusiasm. But I was bluffing. Self-bluffing, really. I would have to back up the gamble of accepting Jeff's invitation to join the monthly game he played in by proving myself worthy of it, by being the kind of guy who could sit at a poker table, drinking and shooting the shit. To me, that represented an all-in existential bet.

For Jeff (not his real name, I'm the only one in this story called on to show my hand), it was a far simpler matter. Saturday's game, at a guy named Paul's house, was fast approaching and they were in need of new bodies. If I could spare forty dollars for the buy-in and wasn't a total asshole, I would do. Jeff would text me the details.

♥ **Paul's game** started in Chinatown in the nineties or maybe earlier—most of the regulars weren't around then, and those who were tended to be hazy on the details—and was headquartered in the place of business owned by a guy I'll call Emerson, allegedly a pioneer in the field of Internet pornography. The cards were dealt, so the story goes, amid lighting rigs and tripods, bed frames and velvet pillows.

Like most origin stories, this one strikes me as at least partly mythological. Nobody knows what became of Emerson the Porn King. But given our current accommodations—usually the kitchen table of Paul's row house, sometimes Jeff's dining room or my basement—his sleazy legend serves as a counterweight to our essential squareness. We carry a trace of Emerson's outlaw DNA, a collective memory of vices less anodyne than kitchen table tequila shots and joints passed around in the backyard. The real Emerson, Ralph Waldo, wrote that "people wish to be settled, only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them." The game is a gesture in that direction, a cultivated plot of wildness within the tidy garden of our lives. For one night a month, we can feel reckless and rebellious, dangerous and nihilistic.

That wasn't remotely how I felt on that evening in May 2011—was it that long ago? was it that recently?—when I first knocked on the ground-floor window of a handsome brownstone, my heart in my throat and a six-pack of IPA in my hand. I was instead in the grip of a familiar apprehension, the blend of dread and hope that marked most Septembers of my childhood. Growing up in an itinerant family, I went to six different schools in four different states. I learned the camouflage and field reconnaissance skills of the new kid: how to scan the room for bullies and possible allies against them; how to mimic the local idioms; how to keep my head down until everyone else got used to seeing my face, at which point I wasn't the new kid anymore.

Not much had changed in thirty years. As the kitchen filled up and the hands proceeded—mostly high-low split pot games, some with multiple wild cards, others more orthodox—I noticed that the players conformed to schoolboy archetypes. There was the jock, the nerd, the artist, and the foreign exchange student. There were a few varieties of class clown: the nonstop joker, the sardonic mocker, the uncensored psyche. There was the cool kid who was everybody's pal, and the cool kid who sat enigmatically in the corner. (That one turned out to be Jeff.)

There was also a girl: Jennifer, whom the rest of us underestimated at our peril. This was not a boys-only clubhouse, but a gender quota seemed to be in effect, as in an action movie about a squad of highly trained assassins with a token female.

John Updike wrote that "a man, in America, is a failed boy." The purpose of our play is to undo that failure, at least temporarily: to light out for the territory, to restore the sense of adventure and irresponsibility of childhood.

Which may be why I initially resisted the poker game. I was attached to my grown-up status, to the badges of my failure. The first time, having bought a few stacks of chips, won a few hands, and lost most of my money—that's what the new guy is for, after all—I got home in the wee hours, wired and confused, breath rank and head throbbing. I tried not to wake my wife, and failed. "Did you have a good time?" she asked. "What was it like?"

Those were harder questions than she meant them to be. It was kind of fun, but I wasn't sure I wanted to go back. Was it because I didn't like losing? (She knows I don't like losing.) No, it was because I worried that I didn't fit in. The only role I could imagine myself playing was that of the new kid, and I wasn't sure I knew how to be—or wanted to risk becoming—someone else.

♥ **Nonetheless,** I was at Paul's door a few weeks later. I would like to say that I had at last awakened to Jocelyn's wisdom, but the truth is that, at least initially, I didn't come back for the friends. I came back for the cards. Poker turned out to be a more interesting game than I had thought, and I sensed the potential for improvement. As my wife and Jocelyn had pointed out to me many times, I was already in possession of the requisite skills.

Poker rewards deceit, manipulation, and stone-faced indifference toward others. A touch of sadism doesn't hurt. The way to win is to force other players to act against their own interests by means of guile, concealment, and outright bullying. These are not the attributes of a good husband, but they're what I had to work with. My hidden inner gambler—who went all in with an iffy hand, who called others' bluffs, who raised in the early rounds to scare competitors away—was my alter id.

My better self—the gracious, generous, loyal version of the bastard with the cards—was still present, but he became a spectator. Such was the case with each player. It was as if the two sides of ourselves were arrayed around the table in concentric circles. The inner layer was a gladiatorial arena of predatory aggression, with every man for himself and the gods of luck against all. Outside was a ring of fellowship, sweetness, and good manners.

To master poker—as a social game, at least; the grind and thrill of the casino and the dopamine frenzy of the Internet are different matters—is to cultivate this doubleness, to learn to sit in both chairs. Playing is pretending. I adopted a series of personas: the guy slow-playing a well-hidden full house, or brashly representing a flush when all I had was a pair of sevens. I was a chump, a sucker, a bystander. My skill was rewarded. My hubris was punished. I sometimes got away with murder. More often, I fell victim to the cruelty of fate. After a few months, I had even made some new friends. I fit in.

♥ **The poker game** is, in many ways, a Night of the Living Dads. We talk about politics or sports or our kids or our jobs. We take cigarette breaks (except for anyone whose wife might be reading this), eat pizza, and drink whatever's around. As the night goes on, the games get crazier and the pots get bigger. There are cries of exultation and howls of aggravation. Poker is the inverse of golf, in which the birdies and the perfect drives are remembered and the missed putts and the time in the rough are forgotten. There is a masochistic pleasure—and a measure of glory—in losing grandly. The losses are never too bad, even when the pile of chips looks huge. Nobody is putting down the deed to his house, the keys to his car, or his wedding band. The chips—a two-dollar limit until the last betting round in a hand, when it jumps to four dollars—are symbolic of those graver risks, and talismans against them. If we keep coming back to the game, nothing too terrible can happen. Only as far as we are settled is there any hope for us.

That's magical thinking, of course. Life follows its usual path outside the game. Since I joined, there have been a few divorces among our ranks, and a couple marriages, too. Babies have been born. Kids have gone off to college. We've written books, started and lost businesses, changed jobs, won prizes.

But the deeper intimacy—the mysterious bond that brings us closer and keeps us interested; the extracurricular emotional investment that saved my marriage, as Jocelyn supposed it might—resides in the play itself. You learn a lot about someone when, over a span of years, you try to read his mind and prevent him from reading yours. You observe his reactions to success and failure, the boundaries of his audacity and the contours of his insecurity. You know that he is watching you in the same way. That all of them are.

When I come home from a game, my breath is still foul. My head still aches. Sometimes I manage not to wake my wife. Other times I fill her in on what's going on with my pals, some of whom are now her pals, too, and report on my triumphs and disasters, which never fails to put her back to sleep. I'm glad it's over—poker is a stressful game—and already desperate for next time. There is the ever-renewing bliss of drifting into slumber next to the person who knows me best, and the still surprising pang of missing my friends. If our luck holds, we'll grow old together, and break even in the end. ■



# WINE GONE WILD

**THEY'RE UNFILTERED. ICONOCLASTIC. MADE THE WAY ROMAN EMPERORS LIKED WINE:**

**funkier, fresher, earthier. With practically nothing added or taken away, NATURAL WINES aim for a level of terroir that mass-produced stuff could only dream of. Join the rebellion and change the way you drink.**

By Jeff Gordinier

Photographs by ARNAUD PYVKA

• • • You can feel it. The resistance is afoot. After years on the margins, the true believers have grown in number and have planted their flags in the soil. Dismissed no more, the rebel forces have conquered entire regions of Europe. Most of Copenhagen and several arrondissements of Paris were liberated long ago, and if you listen attentively while you linger at certain bars in New York and the Bay Area, your ears might just pick up maxims from the movement's manifesto. Should you express an interest in joining, the first thing you are likely to hear is this: "What took you so long?" There are idealists, and skeptics, and those stuck on the fence. As everyone knows, we are living through a politically charged moment.



*The Platonic ideal*

We speak, of course, of natural wines.

If the very idea of natural wines is new to you, well, cut yourself some slack. Fascination with these beverages upticked on American shores during the second half of the Obama administration. Drinkers in the United States still have a lot of catching up to do, and those who have been converted usually talk about having seen the light somewhere in Europe. "I kind of gravitated toward these wines because they were lighter, fresher, earthier—without knowing how they were made," says Jorge Riera, the wine director (and captivating raconteur des vins) at Contra and Wildair in New York. "They opened up a new level in my palate, in my mind. Then I went to Europe and my mind went sideways." By now, Riera has been thoroughly radicalized. "I'll never drink conventional wines," he says. "No. My palate has changed so dramatically."

So how are the wines made? The word you hear most often is *noninterventionist*. In their ideal form, these are wines that come to pass without human beings doing much of anything to control how they turn out. Little to no sulfur is thrown in to halt the fermentation of the grape juice at the desired moment. No yeast or sugar is scattered around to manipulate the flavor or the alcohol content. Food coloring hasn't been used to give the wine the right eggplantish hue; proteins from fish bladders have not been unleashed to prune out the sediment. (Yes, additives like those may actually appear in the wines you guzzle after work.)

For those accustomed to the power and precision of all that Robert Parker–approved big ticket Bordeaux and Gaja Barbaresco, sipping from the natural vat can cause disorientation. It's a bit like being raised on the pumped-up Hollywood blockbusters of the eighties and early nineties and then suddenly being exposed to indie films. It takes a while to adjust from *Die Hard* to *Slacker* in a bottle. And yeah, sometimes the wine (like the Sundance sensation) doesn't quite come together. "Just because someone tells you it's natural doesn't mean it's drinkable," says Thomas Carter, the wine sage who's an owner of New York restaurants Estela, Café Altro Paradiso, and Flora Bar. "I've had countless great experiences with natural wine—but also an equal

## WHAT IS NATURAL WINE, EXACTLY?

Wine can be organic or biodynamic (an esoteric offshoot of organic) but it's not "natural" or "living" wine unless, generally speaking, it meets the following criteria.

**Indigenous yeasts.** Yeast is everywhere, including in that haze you buff off an apple. It adds flavor; the populations in a given vineyard and cellar impart a great deal of character. Lab-grown varieties provide consistency but not terroir.

**No additives.** Even certified organic or biodynamic wines can contain nongrape ingredients and be subjected to all sorts of chicanery in the cellar. Natural producers add no yeast, sugar, flavors, or clarifying agents.

**Low or no sulfur added.** Sulfur dioxide ($SO_2$) is a powerful microbicide. It's often added at bottling to kill yeast and bacteria. Some natural winemakers are purists and others are okay with using a small amount.

SPEAK NATURAL

## BRETT

*Aka* Brettanomyces: *a variety of yeast that in excess causes "animal" or "barnyard" flavors. A little, however, can be the beguiling quality that you'll chase in every bottle.*



*Natural wines can be clean, fresh, and terroir-driven or funky and purposely esoteric, as if they were fortuitous mistakes. Many are not what you may traditionally think of as gorgeous. But as the saying goes, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.*

Illustrations by Joe McKendry

# GO *NATUREL* IN PARIS

**Jeff Gordinier raises (many) glasses at the best natural-wine bars in the city where the rebellion got uncorked**

amount of disappointment."

Zak Pelaccio, the wine-obsessed chef at Fish & Game in Hudson, New York, puts it this way. "How I understand natural wine, when I discuss it with friends, is as a farmed product. Most of these folks would prefer to be called farmers before winemakers." What transforms the fruit is the free-roaming yeast that blooms unprompted in the presence of sugars—on the grapes, on the leaves, on the stems, on the walls of the cellar. You want terroir? This is terroir to the *n*th power. The land makes the wine that tastes like the land. If you imagine an ancient Roman sybarite mashing up fruit and letting it ferment in some old amphora, you're not that far off from the beau ideal. (Although it's not that simple.)

But how do they taste? That answer's not so simple, either. It's easy to describe natural wines as "funky," and it's true that every now and then you will sip one and wonder, "Is this kombucha?" Forfeiting control in the barrel means you can't always predict what you're going to get in the glass.

But there are plenty of natural wines of delicacy and drinkability. "I'm looking for the energy," John Sonnichsen told me at Brutus, his natural wine bar in Oslo. He's onto something with that. As Sonnichsen poured me a glass of Remi Poujol's Le Temps Fait Tout (a blend of ugni blanc and clairette grapes) and La Sorga's Ah! Ramon! (a blend dominated by the aramon grape—get it?), what struck me was the presence of life humming through these bottles from the Languedoc. I felt the same way two days later at Aux Deux Amis, where the owner, David Vincent-Loyola—a man with enough party-down charisma to oversee a Parisian outpost of Señor Frog's—sliced off a glob of fresh mozzarella, baptized it with olive oil, and shoved it into my mouth with his bare hands. "Go! Go! Go! Go! Go!" he said.

There is a vibrancy in these wines that is reflected in the places that serve them. They represent a Very Old Thing and the Cool New Thing at the same time. "Why do we like it?" Zak Pelaccio asks, and then answers: "Well, because we all need something new to break with previous generations, otherwise we can just let the fluorescent lights of the factory floor hum." Weary of what's generic and safe? #Resist.

It's a spirit that's catching on in the States—at Ahmento in Los Angeles and Ordinaire in Oakland and the Four Horsemen in Brooklyn, at Bad Hunter in Chicago and the Ten Bells, Ruffian, Racines NY, Rouge Tomate, Wildair, and even Ichimura sushi in New York—although it remains to be seen whether Americans will ever warm up en masse to wines that challenge you with an imperfect, unusual, more Charlotte Gainsbourg than-Kate-Upton beauty.

In the end, it comes down to how you feel about wildness itself. I happen to be a fan. "Drinking this way is probably better," I muttered while standing at the bar at Aux Deux Amis.

The French woman standing next to me raised her glass and rolled her eyes. "Of course it's better," she said.

• • • You learn something quickly if you embark on a natural wine bar crawl through Paris: You won't need a taxi. Most of the revered Right Bank spots new and old are clustered so closely together in the 10th and 11th Arrondissements that you can hit a serious number of them on foot. —J.G.

**La Dauphin (131 Avenue Parmentier):** Seeking an antidote to wobbly wooden tables and cramped quarters? Zone in on this gleaming glass and marble shrine. Rem Koolhaas and Clement Blanchet designed the space. Basque superstar Inaki Aizpitarte of Le Chateaubriand dreamed up the menu.

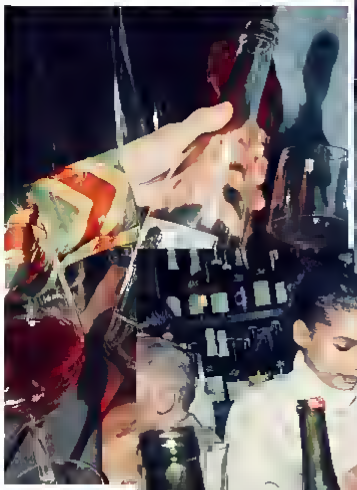
**Aux Deux Amis (45 Rue Oberkampf):** If Hollywood ever shoots a *Hangover* sequel in the City of Light, it should begin (or end) here. Proprietor David Vincent-Loyola presides over a nightly *fromage et vin* bender that hovers just on the brink of pleasantly careening out of control.

**La Buvette (67 Rue St.-Maur):** Go ahead. Ask owner Camille Fourmont for something "funky." She'll shoot you a look that could scorch American tourists on contact. (Just point to a bottle and keep your mouth shut.)

**Clown Bar (114 Rue Amelot):** What goes well with a natural red? How about an entire calf's brain? Vivant (43 Rue des Petites Ecuries): Delectable small plates from chef Pierre Touitou (he's balancing a glass on his head, below). "Some of the wines, which are unapologetically natural, are a leap of faith," food blogger David Lebovitz has written. Consider that a dare.

**La Pointe du Grouin (8 Rue de Belzunce):** "It's kind of a cheeky spot—patrons are expected to pay in 'groums,' the bar's own currency," says Lindsey Tramuta, a plugged-in American in Paris and the author of *The New Paris*. "There's even a change machine in the bar!"

**Le Verre Volé (67 Rue de Lancry):** For all the acclaim surrounding this seventeen-year-old pioneer, it remains the quintessential neighborhood restaurant. Natural wine isn't some studied stance of defiance here; it is simply woven into daily life in a way that could only be described as, well, natural.













*"If there is a genuine movement around natural wine today," says Paris wine-bar expert Lindsey Tramuta, "it's because of a broader societal shift." In other words, by now natural wine represents much more than a way to drink. It represents a way to live. That means nights filled with the kind of effortless cool we captured over several days at Le Dauphin, Vivant, and Clown Bar in Paris.*

## WHY I MADE THE SWITCH

• • • Martha Stoumen, thirty-three, is a classically trained winemaker based in northern California and formerly part of the Living Wines Collective, an influential co-op of *garagistes*. When it came time to make her own wine (marthastoumen.com), she continued taking the natural path, bent earnestly to the task of revitalizing California winemaking with a demotic, punk-rock spirit. She explains why. —*Peter Barrett*

**ESQ:** Isn't it harder to make wine this way?

**MS:** If you want a transparent product that's representative of the place it comes from, you have to unlearn a lot of the techniques they teach in schools, to strip everything away. Then you add back a few essential steps. You take more risks working this way, but you can achieve much higher highs when it succeeds. The wines can be so beautiful. It's like the difference between a sourdough and bread made with commercial yeast. The wild yeast is going to give you all these complex flavors that are unique to your vineyard and even your cellar because of the microbial populations.

**ESQ:** How do you see the current state of the natural wine business?

**MS.** I'm very happy that it's becoming more mainstream; it's a natural progression that echoes what's been happening with food. Wine was industrialized more recently than food, so it's easier to switch back. And the market is changing a lot of conventional winemakers' minds, though many still think we're nuts. Unfortunately, we don't have many rules in wine; we have no ingredient list, so people can't see how much stuff is added to conventional wines. If they did, it would change a lot faster.



*Martha Stoumen*

SPEAK NATURAL

## ORANGE WINE

*Letting the juice from white grapes macerate on the skin for long periods extracts significant color and complexity, creating wondrous results. Yes, it's what all the cool folks were drinking a few years back, but it deserves more than fad status.*



## WHERE TO GET YOUR FIX IF YOU'RE NOT IN PARIS

The best natural-wine stores in America spit rivers of plonk so that we may swallow casks of gems—and many even have monthly clubs. —**Jason Tesauro**

**New York** *Chambers Street Wines.* The granddaddy of anti-all Eschewing critics and wine scores, David Lillie and Jamie Wolff set out to sell wines they loved, grown by farmers they admired. *chambersstwines.com*

**Brooklyn** *Thirst Wine Merchants:* "After tasting something at Noma or in Paris, they come here," says Emila Valencia. She and her husband, Michael Yarmark, are at the fore of the movement. For $98 a month, their Thirst Wine Share is the next best thing to a natural wine sommelier in your cellar. *thirstmerchants.com*

**Boston** *The Wine Bottega.* "Real Wine or Death" proclaims their motto. Sign up for a $50 "Imbibe Academy" class and find your message in a bottle. *thewinebottega.com*

**Chicago** *Red & White:* They focus on hard-to-find, off-the-wall wines that are "Alive in the bottle—active on the palate." *redandwhitewineschicago.com*

**Oakland** *Ordinaire:* The handsomest natural wine shop in America is stocked with French stars and Italian, Spanish, and Californian surprises. Get acquainted via their $108 Club. Grand Ordinaire. *ordinairewine.com*

**Los Angeles** *Lou Wine & Tastings.* Lou's walls spell "natural + unusual" in simple modern typeface, but "unusual" might as well be in bold. Eccentric owner Lou Amdur brilliantly taps the wilder sides of France, Spain, Italy, and the New World. *lounneshop.com*

SPEAK NATURAL

## LEES

*Dead yeast and other sediment resulting from fermentation. Extended aging on the lees ("sur lie") imparts complexity, like that toasty note in Champagne. Lees are often stirred ("bâtonnage") to enhance the effect.*

## 10 (Mostly) Under $40: A NATURAL WINE Passport

**Uncork these bottles and you'll be on your way to discovering some of the best regions and styles of the movement**



**2015 Pierre Cotton AOP Brouilly,** Beaujolais, France, 13.5%, **$33**
A vampire's treat. This feral cedar-like-saddle kind of wine smells of fresh blood and bags for pairing with hare and venison.

**2014 Les Champs Libres Lard, des Choix Rouge,** Ardèche, France, 12.5%, **$23**
The name of this fruity, earthy red blend is a French pun. "Lard, des choix" means "the art of choice" and the play on "lard" is a testament to the wine's drinkability with pork.

**2015 Vigneau-Chevreau Silex,** Vouvray, France, 12.5%, **$18**
Funk on the nose that blows off to reveal famous minerals and crazy acid.



FRANCE
SPAIN
AUSTRIA
GEORGIA
USA
AUSTRALIA
ITALY

**2013 Strohmeier TLZ Wein der Stille,** Styria, Austria, 13.5%, **$75**
This wine checks every box for out-of-the-box natural winemaking—no machines, no temperature control, no fining, no sulphur—and turns out perfectly sublime.



**2014 Partida Creus SM,** Catalonia, Spain, 11%, **$30**
Thirty years ago, small was nearly extinct, but a handful of producers—including Piedmontese expats Massimo Marchiori and Antonella Gerons—have been instrumental in reviving the delicate indigenous Catalan varietal.



**2013 Phassant's Tsare Tavkveri,** Kartli, Republic of Georgia, 12%, **$22**
A light, bright, and floral red, this tavkveri is made in clay vessels lined with beeswax and completely buried under the earth to orally ferment.



**2014 Shobbrook Tommy Ruff,** Barossa Valley, Australia, 13.5%, **$38**
A tantalizing Shiraz-Mourvèdre blend made with whole-cluster fermentations.

**2014 Vignato Saetti Rosato dall'Emilia,** Emilia-Romagna, Italy, 12%, **$16**
This is the real Lambrusco, a fruity, fizzante rosé from old-vine organic vineyards. Fermentation is finished in bottle with an added sulfur and just the right amount of intrigue funk.



**2014 Frank Cornelissen Susucaru,** Etna, Sicily, 14%, **$28 ($60 for a magnum)**
A fun rosato with great texture from a native four-grape blend.



**2015 La Clarine Farm Jambalaia Rouge,** Sierra Foothills, California, 11.7%, **$22**
A wine made with former-philosopher Masanobu Fukuoka's "do nothing" methods. In the cellar, whole clusters are foot-stomped, fermentation takes place in open bins with native yeasts, and juice is aged on the lees.

**TRAVEL FARTHER. Greece:** Modern Greek wine owes something to an influx of formally trained (read: French) winegrowers. And the fecund mainland produces more bottles, but the tiny, unforgiving Santorini yields more characterful, natural wines. **Northern Italy:** Aromatic stunners in white, orange, pink, and red from Piemonte, Lombardia, Veneto, Trentino, and Friuli make it easy to give commercial wines the boot. **Elsewhereville, U.S.A.:** Akin to craft brew, natural wine is tied to locavorism. Many simply don't travel. Hit the road and sniff out wine's version of homebrew in Colorado, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Texas, and Vermont.

# CONGRATS, YOU'VE DISCOVERED NATURAL WINE! (NOW DON'T BE A SNOB ABOUT IT)

Marissa A. Ross, wine provocateur, author of the upcoming book *Wine All the Time*, and columnist for *Bon Appétit*, has some advice for the recently converted (and how to convert).
—J. G.

**ESQ:** What do you say to persuade people to try natural wines?

**MAR:** Honestly? I don't tell them at first. People are still thrown off by terms like *natural*, either because it's one more term they aren't familiar with or they think it's some hippie bullshit. My tactic is more, "Hey, this tastes like cherry balsamic bubble gum and makes you want to grab your tits—you have to try it." And after they like it, I get into why it tastes that way, why it's better for the consumer, better for the environment, better for small business.



*Ross loves wines casual vale*

**ESQ:** What do you say when you encounter a person who is skeptical when it comes to natural wines?

**MAR:** I ask them if they buy organic produce. People are very in tune with what they eat but rarely think twice about what they drink. But you can't care about your kale and not care about your wine. I also recognize that, hey, they're not for everyone, and that's fine.

**ESQ:** When you are in a store or a bar that specializes in selling natural wines, what are some things that you probably ought to avoid saying?

**MAR:** I don't subscribe to the idea that there's a right or wrong way to talk about wine. There's nothing you ought to avoid saying unless you're like, "I'm looking for something with heavy notes of pesticides and sugar like this four dollar merlot I got from a gas station. [ ]"

**ESQ:** What are some verbal cues that tell you that someone you know has very recently joined the natural wine cult?

**MAR:** It's rarely cues as much as it is declarations. When people start drinking natural wine, they are usually blown away by how quickly their palate changes, and how they can't drink anything commercial anymore. And they usually feel bad about it. [*Laughs.*] They don't know how to tell their friends they don't enjoy Funcake Red Velvet Blend anymore without sounding like an asshole.

**ESQ:** We all know a few wine bullies—usually guys—who like to lecture us about their big, rare Jeroboams. Is there an equivalent in the natural-wine realm? If so, what does he sound like?

**MAR:** I've found less of this in the natural-wine world, I think because natural wines inherently promote a certain flexibility and openness. But they're still out there. And they sound the same: like assholes. They usually are bragging over their small-allocation wines that "no one else has except like, Noma," or how sensitive they are to tasting flaws.

SPEAK NATURAL

## QVEVRI

*Huge terra cotta amphoras used in Georgia (the country) to ferment and age wines. The tradition goes back eight thousand (!) years*

SPEAK NATURAL

## OXIDATIVE

*Not the same as oxidized (which is undesirable),* oxidative *refers to those nutty, umami qualities found in sherry and vin jaune*

## The Importance of Importers

Lost in a sea of bottles at the wine store and the clerk has no idea what you mean by *natural*? Look for the right importer and you'll be in good hands. —P. B.

**Louis/Dressner Selections:** Joe Dressner, the late OG natural importer, founded the company with his wife, Denyse Louis, in 1988.

**Jenny & François Selections:** The other great early tastemakers. Jenny Lefcourt and François Ecot started in 2000.

**Critical Mass Selections:** Specializes in Italy but is branching out into Spain, Portugal, and France.

**Geathey Selections:** Brings in some of the most "glou-glou" (the French version of "glug-glug") juice on this list.

**Selection Massale:** Has a tight book of French and German winners.

**Blue Danube Wine Company:** Focuses on Central Europe: Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, and Georgia.

**Indie Wineries:** Brings in an eclectic and high-quality list from around the world.

**Selections de la Viña:** Knows Spain better than anyone.

**Terrell Wines:** A good source for Georgian wines.

**Fifi's Import:** Run by Philip Essomé, who cofounded the Ten Bells wine bar in Manhattan.

**Severine Selections:** A new line from the wine director of the Ten Bells, Severine Perru.



*Fancier than beer but just as easy to open*

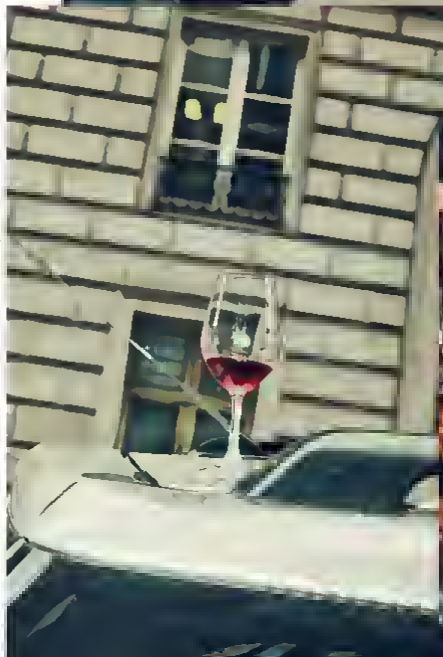
## If You Do One Thing, Make Pét-Nat Your New BACKYARD GO-TO

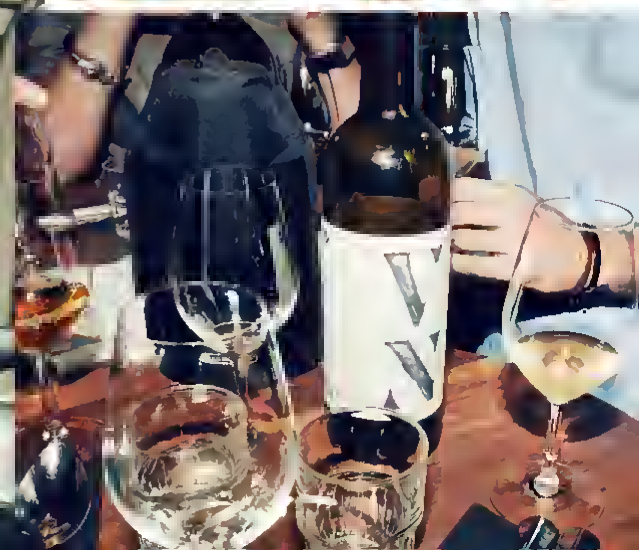
• • • Pét-nat, short for *pétillant naturel*, aka *méthode ancestrale*, or rural method, is the oldest recipe for making bubbly wine, and "one of the most exciting things to have come out of the natural wine world," says Master of Wine Isabelle Legeron. The epitome of this movement, pét-nats vary from barely fuzzy to exuberantly fizzy, but all are unfussy, and most don't even have corks, preferring a craft brew–style crown cap instead.

"It's Kool-Aid for adults," says Thor Iversoo, a wine writer and educator based in Philadelphia, a city brimming with natural-wine bars. If Champagne is Rolex, pét-nat is Swatch, with a slew of colors—white, pink, orange, red—in outrageous packages flaunting their casual outlaw status. "The more the label looks like a junior-high or fraternity art project, the wilder the wine is going to be," says Iverson. It's like shopping for indie vinyl, "which is why the back label is so important in natural wine," says master sommelier Pascaline Lepeltier. —J. T.

*For ten pet nats not to miss, go to Esquire.com.*









# SIGNS and WONDERS

*A rented Lincoln, a haunted hotel, and the last home of William S. Burroughs. Blazing ninety-five miles per hour down the two-lane highway that runs through the middle of America, J. D. DANIELS takes a rollicking two-thousand-mile ride in search of the heart of the heart of the country. Photographs by TERRY RICHARDSON*

"YOU DO UNDERSTAND that the center of the earth is extremely hot," a friend said when he saw me packing Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*. "The center of the earth is uninhabitable."

The geographic center of the forty-eight contiguous states is Lebanon, Kansas. For years, I had wanted to see it. Not to see it. To stand at the center.

All of my friends knew I wanted to go. I had this routine I did after dinner where I balanced a plate on my finger and said the plate was the U.S.A. and the point of balance was Lebanon.

"That's you, all right," my friends said. "Mister Point of Balance."

Lebanon, population 218, is 108 miles east of U.S. Route 83: nineteen hundred miles of yellow center line running straight down the middle of the United States. It passes through North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, all the way from Manitoba to Matamoros.

I wanted to follow US-83, to drive to the core, to the *heart of the matter*, as we say. I have lived in Massachusetts for a decade, but I was born in Kentucky and I lived there for thirty years. I know something about what the pundits will go on calling our divided country.

But the country is not divided. The human heart is divided.

I wrote book proposals, I read maps. I did everything humanly possible except take the trip. And then, a few weeks before Election Day, I went up into the attic. *Take me to the eye of the storm*, I said to my suitcase, and my suitcase said, *Okay*.

NORTH DAKOTA, OCTOBER 2016. Twenty-nine degrees Fahrenheit. My car died thirty minutes from the Bismarck Municipal Airport.

"What brings you to Bismarck?" said a guy I'll call Jim. What had brought him to Bismarck? "Married the wrong woman."

"These new cars are nothing but giant computers now," Dan said. He took a small computer out of his pocket and called Bob down at the dealership, who used a medium-sized computer to search for the solution to our problem.

"You're going to drive 83 down the middle of the country from here to Abilene?" Dan said. "I wouldn't do that if I were you. It's nothing but two-lane. You shouldn't do that. Why are you doing that? I would never do that. Don't do that. It's just farmland," he said, starting the Lincoln. This guardian demon of the first threshold was a tall man with wire-rimmed glasses and a gray mustache. "If your rental dies again, you're on your own. But I guess it's your choice." There is no need to guess.

"This is a nice gas station," Dan said. "You and your fancy East Coast friends might not eat dinner in a gas station, and I can't say I blame you."

I told him I was from Kentucky.

"That's all right, then," he said. "You see these tables here? Every Thursday, they sell a great steak sandwich at this gas station. They must sell a thousand of them."

I drove east, away from Bismarck and Mandan on Interstate 94 through Menoken and McKenzie to Sterling, where I stopped to eat a half-order of biscuits and gravy and read *Outdoor Forum* before turning at exit 182 for US-83 south.

NORTH DAKOTA in pheasant season is ashy silver, yellow, rusty orange and white, cinnamon brown and gray, green and gold, with masses of crows—the word for a religious gathering of crows is not a *mass* but a *murder*—crows lifting off from, or settling into, the corn stubble.

"We keep it simple out here," Jim had told me, and it's easy to see how the environment enforces that. North Dakota is simple. For long stretches, nothing is visible but the earth and the sky, and their unadorned hugeness is on a mythological scale; the sexual congress of Gaea and Uranus, the primal scene of creation.

To this simplicity, a man is revealed as what he is.

"Away with everything," writes Valery, "so that I may see."

A CLOUDY DAY. The mirror of Long Lake at Moffit, slashed open by the two lanes of US-83.

Martha Argerich was on the radio, ripping through the bourrées from Bach's English Suite No. 2 in A Minor as I ripped through Hazelton, North Dakota, at eighty miles an hour in my big red rented Lincoln with its California plates.

I thought: Maybe this trip is not the best idea I ever had. What is the best idea I ever had? How good was the best idea I ever had? Have I already had the best idea I'm ever going to have?

Temvik Butte, Linton Municipal Airport—*Our Concerns: Respect for God and Life, Vocations, Patriotism*—Lawrence Welk Highway, *One Mile Turn Right for the Welk Homestead Historical Site. Welcome to Strasburg, birthplace of accordionist Lawrence Welk.*

The sun came out as I passed Rice Lake and entered South Dakota, 120 miles to Pierre, where in the brown-and-yellow seeming unpeopledness I was

seized by a fierce and bizarre desire for a Hostess King Don, a so-called treat I had never enjoyed as a child. Why did I want one now? As I considered this, I was caught in a speed trap by a nice deputy young enough to be my son, if I had knocked up my high school sweetheart.

*Welcome to Herreid, your first stop in South Dakota.*

"Sir, I pulled you over today because I clocked you doing forty-five miles an hour in a thirty. Can you tell me why you did that?"

"Because I am a fool. That is why."

"License and registration, please."

"My license is in my pocket, officer. I'll get it for you now."

"Hey, sir. Look at me. You don't have to tell me where you're going to put your hands."

"My father was a military policeman in Vietnam," I said.

"And I appreciate the respect you show the uniform. You're far from home. I'm going to run this license, and if it comes back clean, I'll give you a verbal warning. Listen, sir. Shake my hand. I have a television, you know. I can see these terrible cops murdering decent, innocent people. It makes me sick. It makes me cry." He let me go.

**MOUND CITY, POPULATION 71.** Three miles east of Akaska, it can no longer be ignored. North Dakota is beautiful, but South Dakota, *l'Amérique profonde*, is more beautiful still, with its far vistas of yellow and brown and gold.

Three small silos, seven larger silos. To the left, a field of sunflowers with their heads bowed, as far as the eye can see. To the right, corn, as far as the eye can see. And the eye can see very far.

Outer space becomes inner space. All the visible distance, geography as prophecy. It does something to you inside.

What happens in South Dakota is a man sees so far ahead of himself that he can see with his own eyes how things are going to be, what's going to happen next, if he keeps moving in the same direction.

**WAS THAT SIGN DEFACED,** or did it mean to indicate "Agar, pop. 3"? *Agar, Home of the 1977 State B Track Champions.*

Past Onida and on into Hughes County and the state's capital, Pierre, South Dakota, population 13,646. Back in Bismarck, Dan had warned me that Pierre was rinky-dink, but it looked all right to me.

When I went to get dinner, the sign outside my motel said, *The earth has its music for those who listen.* I ate the chicken-taquito plate with red sauce at La Guadalajara and walked around beautiful La Framboise Island, called by Lewis and Clark "Good humered [*sic*] Island." I saw the sun set over the quiet Missouri River and watched dope deals happen in a nearby park before walking back toward the grunts and coughs of the trucks on the main drag. Now my motel's sign said, *Arise Peter kill and eat Acts 10:13.*

Bearing in mind what Dan had told me about the importance of gas stations to civic life in small towns in the Dakotas, I took a chance the next morning on a superb quad shot from a joint marked *Coffee Espresso Latte, Drive Thru in Alley, Live Bait.* You guys think I can make Omaha in seven hours?

"If you drink that, sir, you'll make it in five."

**DON'T DIE UNTIL YOU'VE** seen the sun come up over the Fort Pierre National Grassland. But I'd had enough of US 83. I'd been driving dead south all day, keeping the sun on my left, burning my face. I turned east on Interstate 90, running parallel to old US 16 at Vivian, 187 miles to Sioux Falls.

I had coffee, two eggs, toast, bacon, hash browns, and more coffee at Hutch's Café & Lounge on Highway 16. Near my booth, the regulars grumbled about work and women.

Can you poach those eggs for me?

"No."

**I KNOW SOME MEN** who will fight in a cage for money, and I know a couple who will do it just for fun. But I didn't know anyone who would drive with me through Nebraska.

In 2014, I had a disturbing personal experience, the kind that half the time you call a *hallucination* and the other half an *insight*—half *breakdown*, half *breakthrough*. The vision came to me as I burned a copy of Michael Eigen's *The Psychotic Core* in my grill.

My girlfriend was horrified. "As good almost kill a man as kill a book," she said.

"No," I said. "As good almost kill a man as kill a *good* book. Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image, but he who destroys a good book kills reason itself, kills God. It's from *Areopagitica*."

"Sometimes I hate you," my girlfriend said.

We watched *The Psychotic Core* curl and smoke. It's a good book. Eigen is an unusually interesting psychoanalyst. William S. Burroughs once claimed that "a psychotic is a guy who's just found out what's going on," but Eigeo does more than make wisecracks. He wonders what it means to *find out what's going on*. "The psychotic person dissolves his mind in order to rebuild himself from its elements. Or he may seem to need to search grimly through its debris, leaving nothing out, as if he were looking for something essential, but still unknown. He cannot rest until he sees everything."

"Where they burn books," my girlfriend said, "they will, in the end, burn people."

"They burn people everywhere, all the time."

"Sometimes I hate you so much," she said.

**THE NUMBER OF PLACES** in this country that call themselves the core, *the Crossroads of America*, will astonish you—from Indianapolis, Indiana, to Vinita, Oklahoma. In a game with no rules, in a circle without circumference, every point has equal claim to be the center.

Kearney, Nebraska, contends that it is the Midway City, 1,733 miles from San Francisco to the west and from Boston to the east. My beef with Kearney isn't Nebraska's problem; it's mine. My first professional assignment, which I botched, was to review *The Echo Maker*, a novel by Richard Powers set in Kearney. Richard Powers is not my kind of novelist, but *Dick Powers* is a good name for a man.

A blond girl in my hotel in Omaha had flown from Baltimore for her company's annual meeting. "We could have Skyped it," she said, her hair still wet, as she pushed the elevator button. "Are you going to one?"

"No, I'm going to eleven. Eleven is like one, but it's twice as good."

She stared into my eyes. "Take me with you," she said.

One rainy morning in Nebraska, you wake up and look out the hotel-room window at a red thread-leaf maple and you say: *Remind me what we're doing here.*

You say: *We are driving to the center of America.* It's a metaphor, bright boy. A journey to the central issue, a reconciliation with the Founding Fathers, the mythic lawgivers, the Dick Powers.

**A TEENAGE BOY DRESSED** all in black except for the white soles of his low-top Chuck Taylors and his white socks—black hair, black glasses—he's staring out across four lanes of State

*I know some men who will fight in a cage for money, and I know a couple who will do it just for fun. But I didn't know anyone who would drive with me through Nebraska.*






*I was doing ninety-five miles per hour in a car I didn't own, listening to Motley Crue's "Girls, Girls, Girls" in the middle of Kansas. Happiness.*

Highway 2 into a cornfield, at the Sapp Bros. gas station in Percival, Iowa. He's still there, staring. The movie posters for *Easy Rider* said, *A man went looking for America. And couldn't find it anywhere.* In Iowa, you can *not find* it everywhere you turn. It's right there, staring you in the face. If you don't see America, is that America's fault?

**ON THE FIFTH DAY OF MY TRIP, I HEADED** west out of Kansas City. One telephone pole, like a crucifix. A vulture wheeling over the divided highway.

I took I-29 south looking for the exit to Topeka. I passed massive car dealerships, and the Worth Harley-Davidson clearance tent sale, and Dick's and Dillard's at the Congress Avenue overpass three quarters of a mile from Amity Avenue.

The sky was pale blue with thumbprints of cloud over I-435 to Topeka into Wyandotte County. I drove past exit 13 to the National Agricultural Center and Hall of Fame and the Kansas Speedway, and took I-70 west, listening to the poison drip of AM talk radio.

At the Leavenworth County line, I saw yellow wildflowers and orange-and-white traffic cones and parked construction equipment. I passed exit 212 to Tonganoxie and Eudora on 222nd Street.

*Ellsworth Prison is hiring,* said a billboard decorated with a giant sunflower.

I entered Douglas County and headed for 1927 Learnard Avenue, the little red house where William S. Burroughs lived in Lawrence, Kansas, from 1981 until 1997, when he died. Burroughs's house in Lawrence, with its white balustrade, is the geopsychic core of my American earthquake.

It is difficult to understand, rereading it twenty years later, how Burroughs's little book *Exterminator!* could have motivated me to become an exterminator. I wanted to be a writer. Burroughs was a writer. Burroughs had been an exterminator, I would be an exterminator. What a foolish reason to be an exterminator.

The Japanese beetle, or *Popillia japonica,* is a scarab beetle. *Animalia, Arthropoda, Hexapoda, Insecta, Coleoptera* ("beetles"), *Polyphaga, Scarabaeoidea, Scarabaeidae, Rutelinae* ("shining leaf chafers"). Its colors are coppery and metallic green. It is a lovely little creature.

I don't think I ever knew the name of the poison we used: acetamiprid, or chlorantraniliprole, or what, exactly. In June 1995 alone I must have killed at least three thousand Japanese beetles, maybe twice that many. I am sorry for what I did.

I drove straight to the Burroughs house, past a clockless tower bricked in, I imagined, so as not to provide a rifleman a wide field of vantage. I parked the rental and stood there, staring at the place where Burroughs had written *The Western Lands.* It was a house.

A man opened the screen door and stepped out onto his front porch. He wore a white T-shirt and red gym shorts. He was bald on top, with a wild tuft of blond hair over each ear.

He said, "Can I help you with something?"

"No, sir. I'm here because—"

"Burroughs!" he said. "I will warn you. It's illegal to park there. And they will ticket you!" He closed the door.

I tried to gather my impressions. All I responded to was the lamb's ear and daylilies planted by the roadside mailbox. The temple was empty. I stood there, not finding anything like the deep, pervasive meaning I had wished for, and I mourned.

Mourning is creativity, writes Alice Miller in *Prisoners of Childhood.* It's a good name for a book—it would be a good name for our planet.

I drove down to the freight train station and sat in my car and watched the rail containers pass: Maersk SeaLand, CSX Intermodal, Schneider National, Hyundai, Matson, China Shipping, Triton.

**THE REDHEADED GIRL** at the hotel's front desk said, "We have you in our haunted room. I hope that's all right." A gateway to another dimension!

"Maybe I can use it to go home," I said.

People from all over the country visit that hotel to stay in its haunted room. It has been filmed more than once, and it is mentioned in several books about haunted U.S. sites.

In no time I was snorting pills off the top of the haunted dresser. There is no point pretending this wasn't my plan for my life. On the contrary, it has cost me years of precise, unremitting effort to arrive here.

I tell myself I'm clean and sober, but it's the same every time. I go out of town, snort some pills, eat some lasagna. I walked down Kentucky Street to the Kaw River and smoked a Fuente Long Story. I looked at the light on the water. I fell asleep in a restaurant. The bartender looked at me over her arty eyeglasses and brought me a cup of coffee with six Coffeemates.

"Do you think six will be enough?" I said.

"I like my coffee like I like my men," she said. "White and sweet. You want something to eat?"

"It says here that even the most jaded palate will be ravished. Ravish my palate. Relish my pivot. Polish my rabbit. Pilot my radish."

"I'll bring you a menu," she said.

**WHY STOP IN CONCORDIA,** Kansas? Because of a Union soldier named Boston Corbett. In 1865, Corbett killed the killer of President Abraham Lincoln, who had presided over a deeply divided country. Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth, had been trapped in a burning barn and Corbett had been commanded to capture Booth alive. But he could not resist the echo of shooting Booth from the same angle from which Booth had shot Lincoln.

It seems Corbett's personality was not well structured. He had, for example, been so concerned as a young man about the management of his sexual urges that he'd cut off his testicles with a pair of silver sewing scissors. And the national attention focused on him in the wake of killing Booth drove him madder still. Corbett moved to Concordia and dug a hole, and he lived in that hole until he died.

These, at least, were the facts as I then understood them. I planned to visit Corbett's Hole. I figured I could find it with a little help. The local Boy Scout troop had raised a monument nearby in 1958.

"And then what will you do?" said my friends.

"I'll stand there and see how I feel."

"Have you never heard the expression *Be careful what you wish for?*"

"Yes, of course. I have heard that expression many, many times."

**IN THE VISION THAT CAME TO ME** as Eigen's *Psychotic Core* burned on my grill, I saw that the ancient Egyptians were correct. There is another world beneath this one, a spirit world called the Duat, where Amon Ra's sun chariot rides unseen while we face the dark of night. The truth of that world is this: When Booth killed Lincoln, Booth became shadow president of the United States. When Corbett killed Booth, the man who had killed the man who had been the president, Corbett became the president.

President Booth kills the Lincoln— (continued on page 118)



# EVERY SHOE TELLS A STORY

STYLING BY
Catherina Hayward

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
Ani Cuba

**A Better Leather**
The suede finish on this double-monk makes a fashion guy shoe feel less formal more casual

Shoes ($1,900) by John Lobb

**CAN YOU FEEL IT?** Warm weather is back—time to ditch your beat-up winter clodhoppers and turn a page on your style. From clean white sneakers to suede double-monks, there's **A FRESH SHOE for EVERY OCCASION** this season.

**Going Brogue**
Ferragamo's twist on a wing tip features a cap toe and understated brogueing.

Tramezza shoes ($2,300) by Salvatore Ferragamo



**All Sewn Up**
The simple stitching at the base of this desert boot gives it laid-back appeal

Boots ($450) by Bruno Magli

**Switch Hitter**
Most shoes fall squarely in the brown or black camp—but the contrasting welt on this derby lets you choose either

Shoes ($765) by Tod's.




**The Thin Red Line**
A classic **wing tip**, souped up with a **lug sole**. Like adding all-terrain tires to your Mercedes S-Class.

Shoes ($1,090) by **Christian Louboutin**




**Sneak Attack**
Trends come and go. But a white **leather sneaker**—especially one as **streamlined** as this—isn't going anywhere.

Sneakers ($500) by **Church's**.

For store information see page 123

## SIGNS AND WONDERS

(continued from page 111)




father, Corbett kills the Booth father, and then Corbett crawls into a dirt hole in Concordia. Until 1894, the year it is assumed Corbett died, the president of the United States lived like a rabbit in a hole in the center of the country.

The president of the United States? It is an open question as to which is more pernicious, the wish to command or the wish to obey. Where there is no vision, the people perish. But the people will perish anyway.

We know what we want. First we want to make a president or a king-in-the-woods, a godfather or a father-god. Then we want to kill our god.

We want to kill the great white god under the sea, as in *Moby Dick*, as in *Jaws*, and we want him to rise from the dead so we can kill him again, as in *Jaws 2*, *Jaws 3-D*, and *Jaws: The Revenge*.

Most of all, we don't want to know that the *him* we kill is really *her*—a white whale disguising a black hole.

And why shouldn't we kill our god? It's not as if Jesus was such a sweetheart. When's the last time you read the Parable of the Talents? "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.... Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

Or, as Billie Holiday sang, "Them that's got shall get, them that's not shall lose / So the Bible said, and it still is news."

**ON MY WAY TO CONCORDIA,** I drove past McCray Lumber and Millwork, Nail Arts, Lawrence Feed & Farm Supply, Title and Payday Loans, Jayhawk Pawn & Jewelry ("money to loan"), and CarQuest.

I took I-70 west. At the Topeka city limits, I saw a billboard: *The Holy Bible. Inspired. Absolute. Final. 855-FOR-TRUTH. Psalm 119:89*—which is to say: *For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.*

I passed Hickory Knob, and Buffalo Mound, and Paxico. I passed exit 301 to Fort Riley, home of the Big Red One and the U.S. Cavalry Museum. I drove past the *2nd Friendliest Yarn Store in the Universe*. At exit 250B, I took US-81 north.

I was doing ninety-five miles per hour in a car I didn't own, listening to Motley Crüe's "Girls, Girls, Girls" in the middle of Kansas. Happiness. The sky was everywhere. I passed Snell Excavating and Demolition at the Concordia city limits.

The girls I met when I stopped to ask directions, Raylene and Miranda, were sweet and helpful. They said there'd been a big rain and I'd never make it up the muddy hill to Corbett's Hole. They sketched an alternate route.

"I can't believe you said my name right the first try," Miranda said. "My mother invented it. She couldn't decide whether to name me Mary or Amanda. But that didn't cause you any problem at all."

When the road turns to dirt, you're onto something. Same goes for a bridge two cars can't pass side by side. Soon I was throwing up mud in a rooster tail. In the rearview mirror, I saw my tire tracks zigzagging out of the Walk-in Hunting Area.

Alfred, bring me my Dante. *Let all those whose dull minds are still vexed / by failure to understand what point it was / I had passed through, judge if I was perplexed.*

A hawk came in low. The car fishtailed in the mud. I was stuck in a wet, brown hole in the center of our country.

**SOUTH OF SELLEVILLE,** I turned west on US-36. A man wearing a flower-print dress got out of a minivan at Panther Pause near Scandia, a convenience store on the Republican River. If it wasn't a dress, I'd like to know what he thought it was.

I drove through Montrose. *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye shall not believe,* says the Gospel of John. I saw a sign that said, *Welcome to Mankato*. I saw a raccoon crossing the road in broad daylight. I saw a sign for *Mac's Kwik Stop Gas-N-Grub*. I saw a sign for the annual Jewell County Threshing Bee.

"You're far from home," a man at the next gas pump said.

I looked at his van's plates. Utah.

"I could say the same about you. That's pretty country, that Utah. I was stranded in Zion once."

"You were *stranded* in Zion?" he said. "That's funny."

"It wasn't funny at the time."

"That's not what I mean. It's like saying you were *held prisoner in heaven*. You know what I mean? The castle of Zion is the city of David. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. You know? Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion!"

"Got it."

"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. The LORD loveth the gates of Zion. The Redeemer shall come to Zion."

"Right-o."

"Thus saith the LORD, I am returned unto Zion."

"Yes, man," I said. "I understand you."

**LEOANON, KANSAS.** The center of the country. A cairn of stones, a plaque, an American flag, a green picnic table, a spring-loaded toy horsey for children to ride on. And a little chapel.

A man took a selfie while in his other hand he held—what? "I told my friend I was going to the belly button of America," he said, "and what I've got here is the biggest fistful of navel lint I figure anybody has ever seen. Can you imagine how many weeks I cleaned my dryer filter to collect all this?"

I strolled past the children at play and went into the little white chapel. On the pulpit in the dead center of our country, a Bible was open to Ezekiel 36:36–38:7, the valley of dry bones and Gog in the land of Magog.

*Marion, don't look at it,* I heard Indy say. *Shut your eyes, Marion, don't look at it, no matter what happens.*

Instead, I knelt to pray. But what to pray.

*Despeñeme en la sima y saqué a luz lo escondido de su abismo,* says the Knight of the Wood to Don Quixotes. I threw myself into the chasm and brought to light what lay hidden there in darkness.

I said: *Our Father, who art in heaven.*

Outside, in the park, a little girl shouted, "Daddy, look!"

**I DROVE AWAY FROM THE CENTER.** I passed a pale yellow cinder-block garage.

I took 181 south to Downs and turned east on 24 and passed Cawker City, home of the world's largest ball of twine. I passed Waconda Lake and Beloit and Asherville and Glasco and Miltonvale and Clay Center, and just before Leonardville I turned south on 82 and then east again at Bala on 24-77.

I was north of Maple Hill, fifty-four miles out of Topeka, when the radio warned me that *circulatory* activity had been detected, *circulatory* being a polite way to say *tornadic*. It's difficult to maintain the feeling you aren't in Kansas anymore when you're still in Kansas.

I changed the radio until I found Led Zeppelin playing "Trampled Under Foot" and turned it up as loud as it would go. Pretty loud.

I drove into the biggest storm I ever hope to see. All I saw was sky, and the storm filled the sky. It began to hail, whomping big rocks. I saw a double rainbow touching on both ends while lightning struck unceasingly all around it.

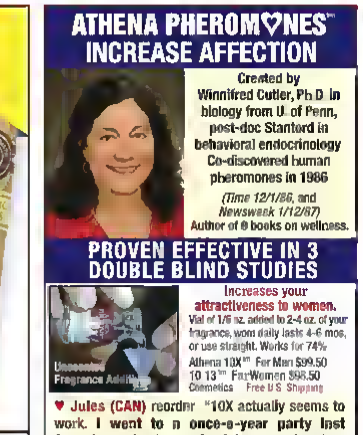
Oh my God, you can't be serious, I thought. What is the point of driving ten hours out here past where Judas threw his boots if no one is going to believe me when I get home, unless you people see signs and wonders you will never believe, but I'm looking right at it and I still don't believe it.

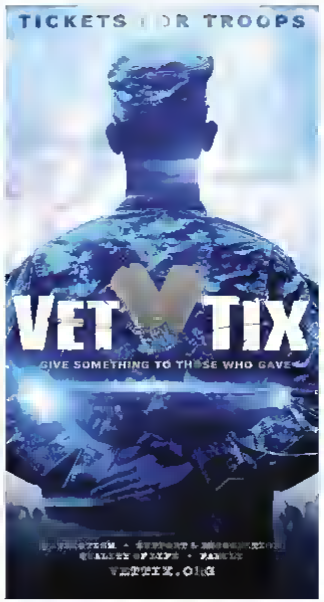



## MEN'S MARKETPLACE

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Before long, I was hydroplaning across an overpass at exit 355 to Forbes Field Airport via 75 south. As I spun in circles, I thought about my own death. It has to happen sometime.

**TO OKLAHOMA THEN I CAME,** where the hotel bar had five trompe l'oeil bookshelves painted on its walls and not a single real book to be seen. There was something faintly untoward, not to say *treif,* about my fried chicken sandwich served with an over-easy egg on top. I ate it. I can eat fifty eggs.

There were weddings in Oklahoma, weddings everywhere I turned. The brides' mothers appealed to me much more than the brides, a sign of a new era in a man's life.

In those huge Oklahoma skies, each evening was momentous. I listened to the Schweriner Blechbläser-Collegium play Handel for brass as the sun went down over Oklahoma City.

In the morning, in Oklahoma, a retired dairy farmer told me and my new friend Gloria about the old S&H green stamps over country-fried steak with gravy, biscuits, breakfast potatoes, and two poached eggs.

"Long day?" Cody asked when I pulled over for a sandwich at his lunch counter. He could tell just by looking. I had to admit it, the drives were wearing me down. "You be careful. Drive safe, now."

I took I-40 west through Oklahoma to Texola at the state line and on to Shamrock, to resume driving south on US-83.

Everywhere I turned in Oklahoma, I saw signs instructing me to stop here or there and buy this or that. But in South Dakota, the road signs had said, *It is forbidden to stop your car in the protected National Grasslands.*

Do you think I can make Abilene in four hours?

"I've never heard of that town, sir."

**IN TEXAS, ROUTE 83** passes through Perryton, Canadian, Wheeler, Shamrock—another Crossroads of America, with a Happy State Bank and a Dollar General, Tendall's Rexall Drugs, Sears Robertson Refrigeration, Geana's Chop Shop, Accurate Remodeling, Bartlett's Lumber & Hardware, Budget Fuels, James Reneau Seed Company, and the El Sombrero Restaurante—through Lutie and Wellington—home of the Wellington Skyrockets 2013 state football champions, home of the Salt Fork Cafe and Cherokee Inn, Roberson Family Restaurant ("truck parking at rear"), the Gettin Spot Drive Thru and the Taco Shack—through Childress, Paducah, Guthrie (pop. 160), Aspermont (pop. 919), Hamlin, Anson, and Abilene. It's like a song, or a poem. It's the country itself that writes the poem.

Every man at the gas station in Childress was wearing a cowboy hat.

Three dead wild boars lay by the side of the road in Radium, Texas.

*Welcome to Anson.* Waylon's Tire Service, the *Western Observer* newspaper (est. 1883), *Anson Chamber of Commerce Welcomes Hunters,* Haechten Crop Insurance, and Butterbeans Busted Knuckle Garage.

**AND THEN THERE WAS SAM.** I handed over my rental car and got in Sam's shuttle for a ride to the Eleganté hotel.

He said, in his bewildering English, "Tell me something, sir. You for Trump or Hillary? It don't matter much to you? Listen, sir. When Hillary Clinton crooked. When she crooked. And she lie."

"To a certain extent, that is true," I said. "But Donald Trump is also crooked. And almost every word he says is a lie."

Sam seemed never to have considered this. "Yes," he said, and he frowned. "But I tell you, sir, when they taking *In God We Trust* off the money. Who's this country built on God and trust. I trust him. In my gut."

Sam trusted his gut. I'm not saying I blame him. My instinct had taken me in search of my country's psychotic core, or my own.

My gut said, *Drive,* and I answered, *O gut, I hear and obey.*

When's the last time you had a long look at what emerges from your gut?

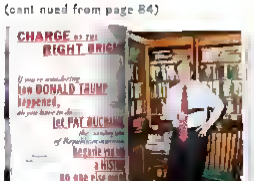
**SAM DROPPED ME OFF** at the Eleganté hotel across from the Mall of Abilene. I ordered the Monterrey plate at Ta Molly's (two sour-cream chicken enchiladas, one soft cheese burrito, refried beans, rice, and guacamole) and cut the end off a cigar with a steak knife at the table.

I ate my dinner and walked out into the dark and sat on a rock and lit my cigar. A truck slowed and a man leaned out its passenger side window.

"You're an asshole!" he shouted. **It**

## CHARGE OF THE RIGHT BRIGADE

(cont'nued from page 84)




Republican party of Goldwater and Nixon." A few liberal Republicans would flee, but the GOP would "wind up with the larger half of the country." Out of this came Nixon's 1972 landslide, on a scale unthinkable today: 60 percent of the vote, forty-nine states.

To hear Buchanan sift through this, with his easy command of electoral numbers and voting trends, is to feel how thin and hollow our politics has become. "Northern Catholics" and "Southern Protestants" still exist in America, but you wouldn't know it. They have been crowded into an undifferentiated blur—white and Christian, with no shadings. But Nixon's men grew up in a denser geography of ethnic difference, full of prickles and thorns. They used terms like "lower middle class Irish Catholic"—Daniel Patrick Moynihan's description of Buchanan, in a letter sent when both were working for Nixon. The two were ideological foes but, when it came to elites, of one suspicious mind.

Later accounts would cast all this as a politics of bitter polarization, the marshaling of resentments and grievances. And indeed it was, to a considerable extent—"the whole secret of politics—knowing who hates who," as Kevin Phillips, a lawyer and the master strategist of Nixon's new majority, summarized it at the time. Phillips was a prodigy who at fifteen had begun working out the intricacies of shifting voter allegiances going back to the nineteenth century. Even younger than Buchanan, he had gone on to work for Nixon's 1968 campaign and in his administration. His 1969 book, *The Emerging Republican Majority,* elevated voter analysis into a rarefied art. "American voting patterns are a kaleidoscope of sociology, history, geography and economics," Phillips wrote. "The threads are very tangled and complex, but they can be pulled apart." Phillips unknotted those threads in formulations like this: "The sharpest Democratic losses of the 1960–68 period came among the Mormons and Southern-leaning traditional Democrats of the Interior Plateau."

Phillips and Buchanan both became famous thanks to Garry Wills's *Nixon Agonistes,* the great chronicle of the 1968 presidential campaign. Nixon's "fresh batch of intellectuals" included Phillips, with his color-coded charts, "a dense little mosaic of colors and figures that seemed to divide the country not into states or counties, but almost by street", and Buchanan, in his black overcoat, "with the collar wrapped up around his lumpy raw face," his "briefing file on all current affairs," and the fluent press statements he wrote for Nixon while reading up on the 1960 election in Theodore White's *The Making of the President.*

The portrait—which Buchanan at one time could summon from memory—was a reward from Wills, *National Review*'s most gifted writer. Buchanan had gotten him face time with Nixon after Buckley, the magazine's editor, and William Rusher, its publisher, came around on the candidate. "Rusher calls me," Buchanan remembers, "and says, 'We're doing a big *National Review* takeout on Nixon. Garry Wills is gonna do it. And you gotta bring him in to see all the Nixon people.' I said, 'Bill, I can't do it. We're about to head into New Hampshire. I can't give this guy all that time just for an article in *National Review.*' He implored and begged me, and Wills came in and talked to everybody. Then we got him time on the plane with Nixon."

The interview, one of the most memorable in *Nixon Agonistes,* was first published not in *National Review* but in this magazine.

For Wills, "Nixon's main problem, I think, was his nose," Buchanan recalls. He's serious. Nixon's ski-jump nose, beloved by caricaturists, was a staple of the period's cornball humor. Even Nixon worked up good-sport one-liners. ("Bob Hope and I would make a great ad for Sun Valley.") Wills, crammed beside him in a DC-3, under the dim overhead spotlight, was transfixed—not by the nose's fabled length but by "its distressing *width,* accentuated by the depth of the ravine running down its center, and by its general fuzziness . . . the nose swings far out; then, underneath, it does not rejoin his face in a straight line, but curves far up again, leaving a large but partially screened space between nose and lip," etc. On it went, Cyrano de Bergerac by way of the New Journalism.

Nixon was appalled. For two years he'd been trying to shed the loser's image that haunted him after two election flops (for president in 1960 and governor of California in 1962), and here he was getting "kicked around" again—for his nose!—by a virtual nobody. Nixon never got over it, Buchanan says, still amazed and shaking with hilarity. "All during the campaign 'Remember, you brought him in, Buchanan.' Near his death, he reminded me, 'You were responsible!'" A wild hoot of laughter. "He would not let me forget it!"

**IF WAS BUCHANAN'S** task to find a metaphor for Nixon's "new majority," which was useful shorthand for politicos talking shop but not for a public that needed poetry. A phrase had come to Buchanan during the heat of the 1968 campaign. With Nixon safely nominated in Miami, Buchanan and others went to the Democratic convention in Chicago. They stayed at the Hilton, on the nineteenth floor. "We had a suite," Buchanan says, "and were invitin' the journalists up. Norman Mailer walks in with José Torres, the boxer."

Mailer, who would describe the conventions in *Miami and the Siege of Chicago,* another of the period's great political books, was exactly Buchanan's type: a writer with a muscular prose style who also used his fists. The two hit it off easily. "We're drinkin' and talkin'. We hear this commotion outside. We went to the window." On the streets below, the police were advancing on some ten thousand demonstrators in Grant Park. "The cops were in a phalanx, all marching like they were in the inaugural parade, but not as many. And they came right down Balbo, across Michigan, right in front of our hotel. And these guys"—the police—"poured into that park and they were whalin' on these people left and right."

A federal commission would later conclude that the cops in Chicago had rioted. But Buchanan was on their side, and he was confident the new majority was, too. He sent a memo to Nixon urging him to visit Chicago and "stand with the great silent majority against the demonstrators."

There it was: "silent majority," a variation on the Depression era "forgotten man," with an important difference. The forgotten man, who would return in Trump's inaugural address, was downtrodden, haunted, and hurting, a step away from the poorhouse. The silent majority were his more fortunate but equally anxious offspring, holding on to what they had in America's affluent postwar society even as civil-rights protesters, antiwar radicals, left-wing professors, and Ivy League journalists all conspired to take it away or send it up in flames.

The phrase had gone into one of Nixon's key speeches, given in November 1969 at the peak of the antiwar protests and carried by all three major networks. "And so tonight," Nixon said, after outlining a strategy for getting out of the war by turning it over to the South Vietnamese, "to you, the great silent majority of my fellow Americans, I ask for your support."

But the national audience didn't hear Nixon alone. They also heard teams of analysts brought into the studio to dissect the speech. The memory still agitates Buchanan. "Sixty-seven percent of Americans, as I recall, looked to the major networks as the primary source of international and national news. Sixty-seven percent! And here are the guys describing what Nixon's doing, and they're all on the other side. And they're all slantin' it. We got a sense that they're standing on our windpipe!"

The protocol was for someone on staff to call network executives and ask for better treatment. Nixon's chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman, instructed Buchanan to do it. But he had another idea. The administration should go public, meet the enemy—"the collective power of the national press," as he now puts it—head-on. "What we had to do was say: They are as political and ideological as we are. They've got all this power, and there's a tiny handful of them, and they didn't get it democratically the way we did. And we have a right to fight against that power using our First Amendment rights, just as they do."

Nixon agreed, and out of this came the most important speech in the modern history of the American media wars. Written by Buchanan, it was delivered ten days after Nixon's "silent majority" address by Vice President Spiro Agnew, himself a culture warrior itching to poke back at the liberal press, which had been ridiculing him since he was nominated. Unlike Nixon, who dismembered every draft, Agnew merely tinkered with them.

The result was a full-scale assault on the media—on its practices and habits, the "instant analysis and querulous criticism" that came between the president and the public. Most remarkable were Buchanan's speculations on the network executives themselves, "a tiny, enclosed fraternity of privileged men elected by no one and enjoying a monopoly sanctioned and licensed by government." What did Americans know about this coterie? "Little other than that they reflect an urbane and assured presence seemingly well-informed on every important matter." They lived and worked in New York or Washington, D.C., Buchanan had Agnew say, where they basked "in their own provincialism, their own parochialism."

The impact was tidal, especially after Buchanan expanded the attack, in a later Agnew speech, to newspapers. The *Times,* for one, would later hire Buchanan's fellow speechwriter, William Safire, to be a columnist, and publish Buchanan on its new op-ed page. But the wars continued. The real trouble came, as always, not from enemies in the press but from disgruntled administration insiders—leakers. One such, Daniel Ellsberg, handed over seven thousand pages dealing with Vietnam, the Pentagon Papers.

Nixon was incensed by the leak and wanted to retaliate with countersurveillance and dirty tricks. Buchanan was the first staff member approached to lead this campaign. A gut-fighter and loyalist, he had no moral qualms and sympathized with the ambition to punish the administration's enemies. "But in the last analysis," he explained in a memo turning down the offer, "the permanent discrediting of all these people, while good for the country, would not, it seems to me, be particularly helpful to the President, politically." A better idea, he thought, was a "major public attack" on the Brookings Institution.

It was the wisest decision of Buchanan's career. The man who took the job instead, Egil "Bud" Krogh, appears in a group photo hanging in Buchanan's house—young-Irish men looking prematurely old in dark suits, foot soldiers caught in the wrong fight. Watergate felons. To Buchanan, they are comrades who took bullets for the cause. As I study the faces and signatures—Krogh, Dwight Chapin, Ed Morgan—Buchanan ticks off the jail time each received. His tone

is that of a Normandy survivor back among the white crosses of the fallen.

Nixon got millions of votes in his long career, but he attracted few believers. Buchanan was one of those few, and he still is. His anger, all directed at the other side, is as fresh today as it was in 1974. "If I were a special assistant to the president and had taken these documents and given them to *The New York Times*, I would have been fired in disgrace and charged with a crime. But if I get secret documents as a journalist and I publish them, I'm a hero?"

**BUCHANAN'S SLOGAN,** "America First—and Second, and Third," coined in 1990, signaled that at his was a politics of protest. So did another notorious eruption, his fiery oration at the Houston convention in 1992. "There is a religious war going on in our country for the soul of America," he declared. "It is a cultural war." At the time, this sounded like the bitter cry of intolerance. And it was, with its denunciations of "homosexual rights" and "radical feminism." But when Buchanan said that the election was "about who we are" and "what we believe," he was delivering a raw message, a shout from a distant shore, that even now many seem unable to hear. Our delicate moral antennae are attuned to the faintest dog whistle, but they filter out the deeper rumbles through which democracy makes its urgent claims.

Coarseness, never the meanest political vice, matters much less than we think. It is the lesson we learned in 2016. Buchanan has been imparting it for many years. Today, some remember the controversies over his denunciations of Israel and the Jewish lobby in the early 1990s. He was judged guilty of anti-Semitism by two of his heroes and allies, Buckley and Irving Kristol. But fewer remember what prompted the dispute. Buchanan was one of a small group of conservatives who opposed the first Iraq invasion—the event that set the GOP on the course that ended with the election of Donald Trump.

The real battle, as usual, was over history. Liberals said the cold war had been about the march toward a globalized civil society. But for Buchanan and others like him, it had been a war against godless communism. Their heroes weren't diplomats and Davos attendees. They were brutalists, like McCarthy, MacArthur, and Franco. Wills was right: Buchanan is a fanatic, though he has his own term for it. "We are conservatives of the heart," he says of paleo-conservative America Firsters like himself. "This is one reason the New World Order, the whole idea, is gonna come down. It doesn't engage the heart. Who's gonna put on a bayonet and charge for some Brussels bureaucrat?"

Well, many of us might, if the alternative is militant ethno-nationalism. But just asking the question got Buchanan exiled from his own party. So did his criticism of foreign aid, of billions spent on defense for "rich nations that refuse to defend themselves," his scoffing at the "altruism" of the "guilt-and-pity crowd." All this while others on the Right, exhuming the world-conquering optimism of an earlier time, invoked a "new universalism," a "super-sovereign" banding of powers. (A confession: In 1999, *The Wall Street Journal*'s op-ed page commissioned me to read him out of the GOP.)

Buchanan restated his argument, courageously, in *The American Conservative*, the magazine he helped found in 2002, when it was clear that George W. Bush was preparing the country for a second Iraq invasion. Buchanan wanted no part of it. A military-history buff, he cited dark precedents: "the Ottoman, Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and German empires in World War I, the Japanese in World War II, the French and the British the morning after." All were undone by hubris. The U.S. was next, and it wouldn't end in Baghdad. "The neoconservatives who pine for a 'World War IV,'" he warned more than a decade ago, would be itching soon for "short sharp wars on Syria and Iran."

Buchanan had been expanding his case in books with grabby doomsday titles, each a renewed cry to take America back: *The Great Betrayal*, *State of Emergency*, *The Death of the West*, *Day of Reckoning*. Some verged on learned crackpottery. "Here is a difference between Patrick Buchanan and David Irving," the historian John Lukacs wrote of *Churchill, Hitler, and the Unnecessary War*, "the revisionist history that Buchanan published in the last year of George W. Bush's presidency. Irving, the notorious Holocaust denier, 'employs falsehoods, Buchanan employs half-truths. But, as Thomas Aquinas once put it, 'a half truth is more dangerous than a lie.'" The review ran in *The American Conservative*.

By this time, Buchanan had dropped off the grid of respectability. Running in 1996, he was compared to Huey Long and Mussolini, and the crowds at his events were likened to the goose-stepping mobs at Nuremberg rallies, presaging the epithets pinned on Trump's legions of "deplorables."

An exception, in 1992, was *The Washington Post*'s Henry Allen, who traipsed through New Hampshire with Buchanan and found not simply race hatred but a warm nostalgia for an older time—the diner in Concord, for instance, that had a sign reading WELCOME BACK TO THE 50s along with 45 records and a cover torn from *The Saturday Evening Post*. Buchanan, Allen wrote, was "paying attention" to these voters. He talked to them, and they weighed what he had to say.

After Buchanan lost, as he almost always did, badly in most states, it all went away—the panic, the hilarity, the casual references to Nazism and fascism. He was sent back to the fringes, where he belonged, a harmless crank. At one point he joined a freemasonry of the outcast, dining once a month at a Hunan restaurant in Alexandria with Samuel Francis and Joseph Sobran, both columnists who'd been evicted from the respectable Right—Francis from *The Washington Times* for espousing white nationalism, Sobran from *National Review* for toe-in-the-water anti-Semitism, or "counter-Semitism," as he called it. Both are now being resurrected as forerunners of the alt-right.

Buchanan's last hurrah in electoral politics, his 2000 campaign on the Reform ticket, resulted in a ludicrous 450,000 votes in the general election, 2.4 million fewer than Ralph Nader got. But like the Confederate generals he reveres, he was defiant in retreat. "When the chickens come home to roost," he predicted to *The New York Times*, "this whole coalition will be there for somebody. They're going to think, 'What ever happened to that guy back in 2000?' There's no doubt these issues can win."

It took sixteen years to come true, the same interval that separated Barry Goldwater's annihilation in 1964 from Ronald Reagan's victory in 1980. Even in the information age, movements need time. But Buchanan now has had the satisfaction of hearing his argument restated by a president, who has said, "I'm not representing the globe, I'm representing your country."

In this delicious moment, Buchanan has found his sweet spot. For the first time since Nixon's reelection, events have caught up with him. He asks Shelley to bring in a copy of *The Financial Times*. The headline says, TRUMP PUTS PROTECTIONISM AT HEART OF U.S. ECONOMIC POLICY. Buchanan chuckles. "A small victory."

There are more these days. They arrive in the customized packages of news reports he awakens to each morning. He goes online to read Antiwar.com but is otherwise loyal to the print journalism whose influence he helped weaken. The five papers he reads daily include the *Times* and the *Post*, as well as the *FT*. "I wasn't all that aware of Breitbart, to be honest," he says. Also, "I don't tweet."

**REVOLUTIONS SCRAMBLE** the present and cloud the future. But they throw new beams of clarity on the past. And the past is much on Buchanan's mind, as his place in history grows larger and better defined. He's been gathering up his voluminous papers. "Shelley holds on to all my correspondence. I've got boxes of them all over the place. Three years of papers on the Nixon comeback from January 1966 to January 1969 that no one else has copies of—and eight years of papers from the Nixon, Ford, and Reagan presidencies. Also clippings, papers, speeches, memos from my three presidential runs, and thirty-five years of columns, op-eds, speech notes." He hasn't chosen an archive yet. There's still too much to do: proofs to correct for the new Nixon book, a promotional tour to complete.

All of a sudden, what Pat Buchanan thinks matters to just about everyone, NPR and *Politico* as well as Fox News. He has a good deal to say, but then he always did. The book that got him fired from MSNBC, *Suicide of a Superpower*, isn't just a litany of provocations. It is a warning that the country is changing. "A rebellion is under way in America," Buchanan wrote in 2011, "a radicalization of the working and middle class ... a populist rage against a reigning establishment. But what explains the failure of the establishment to understand its countrymen?" Today, many others are asking this, too.

The final joke is that Buchanan knows as well as anyone that the good old times aren't coming back. "I get my UN statistics, and the latest ones came in on these big wall charts," he says. The writing, so to speak, is on the wall. Item: "Africa has 1.1 billion people. Will have 2 billion in 2050, and 4 billion in 2100." Item: "There's not a single country in Europe, save maybe Iceland, that will have a birthrate to enable its native born to survive and endure as the majority in those countries at the end of the century." And America? "Texas, California, Hawaii, New Mexico," he notes, are already majority nonwhite.

Just look at the seat of the Republic. "Trump got 4 percent of the vote in my home-town—4 percent! A Bolshevik would have done better than that when I was growing up!" Another burst of laughter. "I couldn't believe it. California's a state Richard Nixon won six times. The first time he went for the Senate, he set a state record. 1950. He won it six times, lost it for governor once. Reagan won it in four straight landslides." Today, there is talk that California will secede from Trump's America, from Buchanan's. "Some of us," he says, "are for it."

And what of Trump's early days in office?

"I'm very hopeful some of the things can be done, but I'm pessimistic about whether we can turn it around," he says. For one thing, Trump's reluctance to admit error is worrisome. "White Houses get in trouble when they don't tell the truth about blunders and mistakes," Buchanan wrote in an email. And while it's paramount for presidents to stay on good terms with Congress—"a loyal majority is indispensable to get things done, and to cover your back"—Buchanan warned that Trump's health-care bill would leave "millions of working-class folks who placed their trust in him out in the cold." The silent majority knows what betrayal looks like, and if it happens again, Pat Buchanan will be there, ready to go one more round. ■

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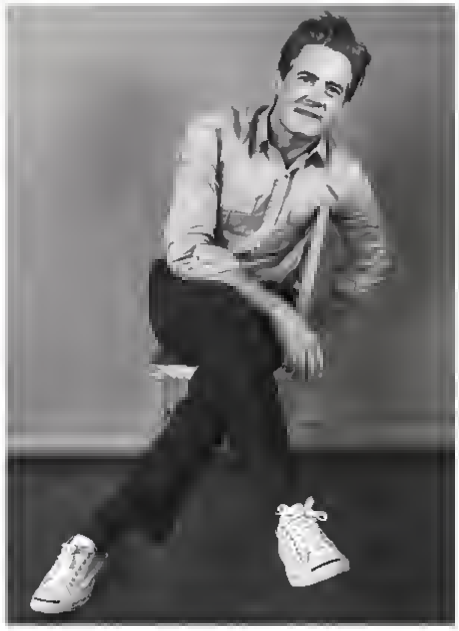
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# Kyle MacLACHLAN

*Actor, 58, interviewed by Bruce Handy in New York*

*After* Twin Peaks*' twenty-five-year hiatus, MacLachlan returns this month to his most famous role*



Sprung from the considerable depths of David Lynch's id, with an assist from cocreator Mark Frost, *Twin Peaks*, one part detective show, one part soap opera, was a surprise hit in the early nineties, running for two seasons—one nearly perfect, the other hit-or-miss. Thank Showtime for bringing it back for a belated third, along with its unlikely protagonist, FBI Special Agent Dale Cooper, played by actor Kyle MacLachlan. MacLachlan has served as something of a muse for Lynch, having also starred in the director's adaptation of *Dune* (1984), a famous misfire, and *Blue Velvet* (1986), one of the most memorable films of the 1980s. Filling out MacLachlan's résumé: the notorious *Showgirls* (1995); appearances in dozens of films and television shows; a fifteen-year marriage; and a recent second career as the owner of a Washington state winery, Pursued by Bear.

**I fully recognize that at fifty-five,** you're not going to look like twenty five. But still you have to put in a good effort. I always say it's not the zeros that are tough—it's the fives. It's not turning forty or fifty; it's forty-five, fifty-five. Having just hit fifty-eight, I think my sixties are going to be great, until I hit sixty-five. [*Laughs.*]

**Fear is a great motivator to stay in shape.** A shirtless scene is a great motivator. Or naked scenes. Some people don't care. My hat is off to them. Jason Segel, I admire him. Will Ferrell—go, man! Because they look real. Look at movies from the sixties and seventies. When Steve McQueen takes his shirt off, he's not ripped. You're like, "Yeah, that's the real guy." I blame Arnold.

**I go where the role is.** It has to fulfill certain criteria. Those criteria shift sometimes, depending on the bank account—which explains some of my choices over the years.

**I didn't grow up saying,** "I have to be an actor." I grew up saying, "I love this. I'm getting positive reinforcement, and I'm getting work." But my life is equally important. I'm happy to be off the grid for periods of time. Maybe I get a little anxious, again, depending on the bank account. But it doesn't define me.

**When you hire David Lynch,** you let David Lynch do David Lynch. And you just walk away. People have tried to take what he does and reshape it in some way, and . . . you can't. He's always been very clear about his vision.

**Cooper is maybe my favorite character.** There is a lot in him that is similar to mine: his enthusiasm for coffee, Douglas firs, and doughnuts. He tries to figure out who people are before he makes a judgment about them. He's the eccentric in the middle of an even crazier world, but he's your point person. He's all you've got going in.

**I've loved wine since high school,** but with no understanding of what was and wasn't good. The first really good bottle I had was from David Lynch. He sent a bottle of Lynch Bages to my hotel as a thank-you when I auditioned for *Dune*. I drank it and thought, *This is some good wine!*

**What did I learn from *Showgirls*?** I learned what not to do! My God. When the project came to me, I was like, "This is Paul Verhoeven!" I loved his early films: *Soldier of Orange*, *Spetters*, *RoboCop*. I read the script and thought, *This is really edgy. This is really sexual. This can shake things up a bit.* And during the filming, it seemed fine. We shot some good scenes. Some of it was a little weird, like when I had to walk around the pool naked. Then I saw a screening of the movie for the first time and was like, "It's a disaster." Everyone took a huge hit, me, too. But I kind of enjoyed the experience of making it. I got to ski a lot during that time. [*Laughs.*] And I learned to see where something could go terribly, terribly wrong. I used to just look at the positive potential of a script, how it could be this. [*Raises hand.*] Now, although it's not really my nature, I also look at the opposite, the negative. It could be this, too. [*Lowers hand almost to floor.*]

**By and large, I've been happy with my career.** I've made a living. I've done some work I'm proud of and some work I'm not. And I'm still here. It's funny, I run into guys that are in my wheelhouse—similar age, been up for similar roles—and a common refrain, unless they're superstars, is "We're still viable. We're still being hired." There's a lot of pride in that, just the resilience. ■







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